A

COLLECTION

OF

TRACTS,

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

Written by *THOMAS CHUBB.*

The SECOND EDITION.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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M,DCC,LIV.

*18

Chubb was originally a
Mechanic at Salisbury,
but hav[ing] a great Faculty
of Reasoning became
formidable Controversialist
without the least Knowledge
of the classic Languages.
his 1st Tract was against
Dr Clarke Doct: of Div[ity]
his Opinions wholly
heretical —
he died
in 1747 —

A SHORT AND Faithful Account OF THE LIFE and CHARACTER Of the Celebrated Mr. *THOMAS CHUBB*, Who died lately at *Salisbury*. IN A LETTER from a Gentleman of that City to his Friend in *London*.

Vera Gloria radices agit, atque etiam propagatur: Ficta omnia celeriter, tanquam Floſculi, decidunt; nec ſimulatum poteſt quidquam eſſe diuturnum. TULL.

Abnormis ſapiens—— HOR. SAT.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN NOON, at the *White-Hart*, near *Mercer's-Chapel, Cheapſide*. MDCCXLVII.

(Price Six-pence.)

1747

*68-366

A

SHORT,

AND

Faithful Account

OF THE

LIFE and Character of Mr. CHUBB.

SIR,

DOUBTLESS, you will have heard, before this comes to hand, of the irreparable Loſs which the Publick has ſuſtained, in the Death of that eminently-good Man,

Mr. CHUBB. As he had, by his Writings, rendered himſelf a Favourite of yours, an authentic View of his Life and Character may be no diſagreeable Amuſement, and will, I flatter myſelf, entitle me to your Thanks.

HE was the youngeſt Son of Mr. *Henry Chubb*, heretofore a Malſter of *Eaſt-Harnham*, a ſmall Village or Hamlet, contiguous to the City of *Salisbury*, and was born on *Michaelmas-day*, in the Year 1679. His Father dying when he was young, and the Widow, having the Care of three more Children on her hands, with a ſlender Maintenance for their Support, which was obtained by her Labour, THOMAS (the Subject of my Letter) received no other Education than being inſtructed to *read*, and to *write an ordinary hand*. When he was about fifteen Years of Age, he was put Apprentice to Mr. *Rawlins*, a Glover in this City, where, during his whole

whole Service, he behaved himſelf entirely to the Satisfaction of his Maſter and his Family, who always maintained a particular regard for him. After Mr. CHUBB's Apprenticeſhip was expired, he continued, for a time, as a Servant to Mr. *Rawlins* in the Trade. Being a young Man of uncommon Genius and Sagacity, it drew on him the general Good-will and Reſpect of the Citizens: Among the reſt, Mr. *John Lawrence*, a Tallow-Chandler (ſince dead) having contracted a generous Friendſhip for him, and the Trade of Glove-making being prejudicial to Mr. *Chubb*'s Eyes (who had always a Weakneſs of Sight) he, about forty Years ago, took him under his Roof, as a Companion and to aſſiſt him in his own Buſineſs. Thus, all the former part of his Life, Mr. CHUBB obtained an honeſt Livelyhood, by his Labour.

About this time, there having been many Paper-Diſputes, in regard to the Scripture-Doctrine of *a Trinity in Unity*, Mr. Chubb, for the Satisfaction of himſelf and ſome of his Friends, without any the leaſt View of becoming an Author, arranged his Sentiments, in the manner they now appear to the World, in his firſt Tract, called "*The Supremacy of the Father aſſerted*, &c." The Sentiments, contained in this Pamphlet, being oppoſite to thoſe orthodox Notions generally prevalent, gave great Offence to many warm Zealots in this Neighbourhood, from whom the Author met violent Oppoſition and much Scurrility. *Fire and Faggot* was the Word! and, happily for him and the publick Vindicators of Truth, the Storm of Perſecution which ſeem'd to threaten the conſcientious Aſſertors of Liberty, in theſe Kingdoms, was warded off, by thoſe Friends of Freedom, the preſent

preſent Royal Family's holding the Scepter over us.

His more immediate Attention being unexpectedly engaged, by the aforementioned Oppoſition, it neceſſarily led him to a Vindication of That and a Contemplation of other Subjects, relative to Truth. To this Incident, and that wonderful Penetration he was endowed with, to ſee through and decry the Errors of paſt Ages, we are indebted for the many curious and valuable Pieces, which he afterwards publiſhed; wherein, to an unprejudiced and diſcerning Reader, the ſtrongeſt Energy of Reaſoning is undeniably exerted; the Extent of the moral Capacity (unbiaſſed by the deluſive Aids of Scholaſtic Inventions) is, in his own Example, wonderfully laid open; the Dignity of human Nature is reſtored and reſcued, from that Cloud of Ignorance wherewith the Superſtition or Craft of Monaſtic Times had

had darkened it; and GOD, the benevolent Giver of all Understanding, is duly honoured, in the Ascription of those nobler Faculties and Dispositions, inherent to the Mind of Man, which render him the bright Image of his Almighty Maker, and call for the highest Gratitude from his Creatures.

HAVING commenced Author, his Merit, too conspicuous to be confined within the narrow Circle of his Acquaintance, soon diffused its Rays thro' the whole Nation; and, which may be considered as an Honour to his Parts, and an Evidence of his extraordinary Genius, the late Sir *Joseph Jekyl*, Master of the Rolls, took him into his Family, and made him his Companion, at the Seasons of his Retirement, from the Fatigues of the Chancery Business, or Relaxation, into the Country. Here Mr. CHUBB was introduced to the personal Knowledge and Intimacy of many Gentle-

Gentlemen of Letters and Eminence; and from them this late Ornament of our City received ſuch Kindneſſes as, we may preſume, originally enabled him to live, in ſome ſort, independent of Labour.

BEING rather turn'd for a contemplative, ſober Life, than to reſide among the Great, altho' tempted with the bait of Affluence and a genteel Settlement for Life, his Inclination prompted him to leave Sir *Joſeph*, after a Continuance with him a very few Years, to ſettle in the Country again, among his Friends. And ſurely no Man could enjoy them with greater Felicity, for a long Series of Years, than he has done.

AS he increaſed in Age, he increaſed his Friends, and, conſequently, his Fortune; ſo that, for many Years paſt, he has lived wholly independent of Labour, yet he always delighted in giving aſſiſt-

ance

ance in the Trade, which, by Mr. *Lawrence*'s Death, devolved on a Nephew; and has, to the laſt period of his Life, been a Helper in it.

He continued a ſingle Man to the End of his Days; for he often obſerved, that "as Matrimony increaſed the Cares "and Anxiety of Life, he was fond of "his Liberty, and had already poor "Friends and Relations, without an "Addition, to aſſiſt with that compe-"tent Fortune, which, by the Gene-"roſity of his Friends had fallen to "his Lot." And moſt true it is, that, conſidering the Extent of his worldly Subſtance, no Man's Talent was or could be better employed for the Advantage of the Publick: for he was conſtantly among his poorer Acquaintance, not only tendering them kind Admonitions and Advice, in the conducting with Propriety their Affairs; but was, on every fit Occaſion, aſſiſtant, as far as his Purſe

Purſe would extend, in ſupplying their Neceſſities, and rendering Life eaſy and comfortable to them. Nor was he in the leaſt oſtentatious, for his Charities were rather private than publick, in the Diſpoſition, and the Object ſeldom knew it's Benefactor.

Mr. CHUBB was a Man of great Affability and uncommon Modeſty; ſo ready of Conception in any caſual Argument ſtarted in Company, that he was never at a loſs for an Anſwer to any Opponent, but, generally was ready with it, before his Antagoniſt, when he had delivered it, had a Reply at hand. He was not only a ſolid Reaſoner on controverſial Points of *Divinity*, but well underſtood the *Mathematicks*, *Geography*, and many *other* Branches of *Science*, in his *Mother-Tongue*, (for *Latin* and *Greek*, or any of the *learned Languages*, he was a Stranger to) and, by talking properly on theſe, he became

an amiable Companion in all Companies. He was, to the higheſt degree, good-tempered, and no ways pufft up with his ſuperior Abilities, but frankly accommodated himſelf, as well to his Acquaintance of inferior Knowledge and common Underſtandings, as ſuch to whom Providence had been more laviſh of intellectual Gifts. The beſt part of his Time was ſpent in Contemplation, and the Enjoyment of his Friends, to leave whom no earthly Temptations, not the moſt lucrative Proſpects, could induce him: It was his Choice to *die* among them, which was one Reaſon, given for his Refuſal of a very liberal Offer, made to him not long before his Death. There might, in this Place, be inſerted the Names of many Gentlemen that would do honour to the Memory of Mr. CHUBB; but as he is gone, and that Knowledge would be of no publick Advantage, let it reſt for the preſent. Yet, 'tis but juſtice

to

to add, that *Great-Britain*, alone, did not contain every Friend that he had: the more diſtant Inhabitants of the Globe held him in Eſteem, tho' known to them only by his Writings; and Natives of *America* thought themſelves happy in his Correſpondence. Oh *Salisbury!* could Plenty and Grandeur have ſeduced him from thy Habitations, he had been loſt to himſelf, his happier humble State; and thou wouldſt have long ſince been deprived, in him, of a Spirit, whoſe rich Qualities outvied all the Wealth thy Walls could boaſt to contain beſides! of one, whoſe Name grateful Futurity will hear, with Reverence and Admiration, when thy lofty Spire ſhall ſink and crumble into Duſt!

By an over-attentive Application to Writing, he had impaired his Sight, which, as before obſerved, was naturally weak; and, latterly, he complained in his Head; two very natural Diſorders

for a Man of ſtrict Application to Buſineſs and Study, in the advanced Years he arrived at. And though he had a vigorous Conſtitution, yet, by a Diſuſe of his accuſtomed Exerciſe, which was much-walking, and by an imprudent Indulgence of Milk-Diet, at an improper Seaſon, it ſo diſpoſed his Fluids, that, on *Sunday*, the 8th of *February*, Inſtant, after a ſhort Complaint of an unuſual Pain in his Stomach, he ſuddenly breath'd his laſt, as he ſate in his Chair. He had been ſo well, the ſame Day, as to dine abroad with his Friends.

So died Mr. THOMAS CHUBB, in the Sixty-eighth Year of his Age. A Man of profound Judgment, of uncommon Perſpicuity, of unblemiſhed Honeſty and Simplicity of Life, of courteous Manners and benevolent Diſpoſitions to his Fellow-Creatures. He was, in theſe and all other Views, an amiable Pattern for Society, ſuch a Pattern as

all

all ſhould emulate, but few, alas! will be able compleatly to copy. His Death, ſudden as it came, was of that kind he wiſht, being prepared to receive it; for he often declared, that, "as he enter-"tained no diſagreeable Apprehenſions "of Futurity, but was in conſtant Ex-"pectation of his Diſſolution, he hoped "it would be in the moſt ſhort and "eaſy Conveyance to his appointed "Change, unattended with bodily Pains, "or the Sight of anxious Friends, to "diſturb his latter Moments."

Mr. CHUBB's PERSON was not ſtately, he was both ſhort and fat; but his Countenance was mild, and indicated great Solidity within. Conſidering his Age, he lookt well to the laſt. His Dreſs was quite plain, his Demeanour artleſs, and altogether ſuitable.

THUS you receive, from me, a faithful Account of this great, good Man, whoſe

whoſe Character, as ſuch, needs no Exaggeration. The Truth of it is, indeed, clearly demonſtrated, by one obvious Reflection, that tho', in his Life-time, he was beſet with People to whom he was greatly obnoxious, on the ſcore of his Works; yet *They* nor *Envy* itſelf, could ever publiſh any one Vice or immoral Action, in his Practice or Converſation, threeſcore and eight Years! —When, O Virtue! wilt thou find ſuch another Votary? Thou, O Verity! ſuch another Champion?

As to his WRITINGS they will ſpeak for themſelves: I am not, however, now inclined, (for the Reaſons hereafter mentioned) were I at leiſure, to ſay much about them. I am under a moſt firm Perſuaſion, he wrote after, and purſued TRUTH, howſoever diſguiſed. Whether he found it, let impartial Poſterity determine. The Judgment of one of the greateſt Wits the preſent Age has known,

who

who was no Flatterer, will be a laſting Teſtimony of the high Eſtimation Mr. CHUBB's Works were held in, with Men of Learning and Parts, who were his Cotemporaries. I cannot help tranſcribing the Paſſage, as I find it, in a Letter of Mr. *Pope*'s written to Mr. *Gay*, then at the Duke of *Queensbury*'s; it is dated the 23d of *October* 1730: after ſpeaking therein of the noted Mr. *Stephen Duck* the Threſher, as a *Wiltſhire* Phænomenon, (who, it is ſaid, has lately taken Holy Orders) he enquires, "By the way, have you ſeen or con-"verſed with Mr. CHUBB, who *is* a "*wonderful* Phænomenon of *Wilt-*"*ſhire?*" He adds, "I have read through "his whole Volume, with Admiration "of the Writer, tho' not *always* with "Approbation of the Doctrine." Conſidering no Mortal ever arrived to a Perfection of Reaſon, what more could have been ſaid to Mr. CHUBB's Advantage? What leſs, by a Man of Senſe,

who

who had *read thro' his whole Volume?* For ſuch is the Partiality of the Times, People frequently condemn, without reading; and cenſure they neither know what, nor why. To ſpeak a Fact, the Bible itſelf is not exempt from this uncandid Treatment.

I Must confeſs, I had ſome Thoughts of refreſhing your Memory, with a Recapitulation of the Pieces he publiſhed, according to the Order of Time in which they appeared, interwoven with an Account of ſuch Remarks upon, or Anſwers to them, as were alſo occaſionally publiſhed, either by the Abettors or Oppoſers of his Doctrines: But, as I have an Intention you ſhall be at liberty to publiſh this Letter, I bethought myſelf, it would be a Work of ſuch time, as might give opportunity for mercenary, or prejudiced People, to impoſe upon the World falſe Accounts of the Man, or perhaps fictitious Compoſitions in his Name,

Name, before I could finish it. Besides, the Tracts and Pamphlets themselves, both on one Side and the other, may probably be more commodiously procured in your Metropolis, than here; and would, indeed, be more properly serviceable for any impartial, able *Historian*, who should propose to make a Draft of Mr. CHUBB and his PERFORMANCES, in their full Proportion, than for this little Epistolary Sketch, or Essay upon his Character. Instead thereof, I can give you the Satisfaction of hearing, if there's any depending upon what I have only heard, (yet I think from credible Authority,) myself, That as much as Mr. CHUBB has surprized, and excited the Attention of, the unbiassed Part of his Readers, with what has already been printed of his, it is assured, they will be exceedingly more so, when they shall be obliged with his REMAINS. For it is confidently asserted, that the Legacy he has

bequeathed to the World, is richer, more elaborate, more compleat, and more conſiderable, than all he beſtowed upon it, in his Life-time. Men publiſh their Writings, while they live, for the ſake of Intereſt, Reputation or Truth, and all theſe, or ſome of them, often in Conjunction. Thoſe he *did* publiſh, unavoidably promoted his Intereſt and eſtabliſhed his Reputation, to his Content; and thoſe he left behind him might have enlarged both; but of theſe, 'tis to be preſumed, he preferred a *Poſthumous Publication*; Labour without Profit, Fame rather than Reputation, and Truth thereby, Truth undiſturbed, before them all. His very Antagoniſts contributed to his Intereſt, and to his Reputation, as well as his Arguments; but he wanted his Arguments to be diſencumbered of his Antagoniſts, that Truth might appear more amiable, calm and unclouded: and this, he knew, was never ſo effectually to be accompliſhed,

as

as by the healing, the compoſing Hand of Death, that grand Reconciler of perſonal Prejudices, who lays Envy, Animoſity, and Prepoſſeſſion aſleep. And it is no greater Wonder that Men's Sentiments ſhall thrive and grow authentic, when their Authors, ſeparate from them, are at reſt in their Graves, than that young Layers, when they are cut off from their Parent-Stem, ſhall acquire Roots of their own, extend their Heads more eminently, and become moſt fruitful Trees themſelves, that were but the Branches of One before.

THESE REMAINS, which, I think, carry the general Title of *his Farewel to his Readers*, conſiſt, as nearly as I can recollect to have been informed, of about a Dozen Parts, and are Diſcuſſions upon the moſt important, intereſting Topics of Religion: Such as aim at the moſt rational Conceptions of the Supreme Being or Creator of the World, and

the Worſhip that may be moſt grateful from his Creatures; the State of their Souls in the Separation from this Life, and what may be thought of the tremendous Doom; the Tenets of the principal Religions upon Earth, eſpecially of the *Chriſtians* and their Holy Founder; of the prophetick, miraculous, and parabolical Parts of his Doctrine, and alſo of his apoſtolical Hiſtoriographers, *&c.* Upon all which, he ſeems to have ſtruck out many new and weighty Conſiderations, in a very copious and convincing Manner, as it is reported. We long with Impatience here to ſee them, for we have formed great Expectations from them. Whether they will be publiſhed by Subſcription, or in what other Manner, I will endeavour to learn, and it may poſſibly, in ſome reaſonable Time, be in my power to reſolve you. In the mean while, I remain, SIR,

Your Devoted,

SARUM, *Feb.* 16th, 1746. *Humble Servant*, &c.

A

TRIBUTE

OF THE

MUSE,

To the Memory of the late

Mr. THOMAS CHUBB.

For Modes of Faith let graceleſs Zealots fight,
His can't be wrong, whoſe Life is in the right.

ESSAY ON MAN.

LET Envy die, let Calumny be dumb,
CHUBB triumphs where Detraction cannot come:

Aloft

Aloft He ſoars to REASON's native Sphere,
And quaffs rich Draughts of boundleſs Knowledge there;
Where *Bacon, Milton, Locke* and *Newton* ſhine,
Mingles high Converſe, built on Truths Divine:
Rapt with Conceptions clear as heav'nly Light,
No Miſts of Error dim the Soul's pure Sight,
She joys to find that her Ideas, now,
So nearly tally with her Thoughts below.

WHEREFORE to Man were active Pow'rs aſſign'd,
If *Sov'reign Reaſon* miſconducts the Mind?
Coercive *Argument* was ne'er beſtow'd
On CHUBB, to tempt weak Mortals from their GOD;
Tho' Fools reject the Guide *that* GOD has giv'n,
And grope their Way, thro' *Myſtery*, to Heav'n. Tremble,

Tremble, abſurd Perverters of the Text,
This World ye may deceive, but not the next.
Shake off thy Fetters, *Reaſon*, and be free,
'Tis CHUBB unbinds, maintain thy Liberty.

BUT oh! what Solace, *Reaſon*, canſt thou give
To Us, condemn'd without him here to live?
What nervous Pen ſhall own thy righteous Cauſe,
When blind Zeal tramples thine Eternal Laws?
Where ſhall the Widow, where the Orphan, pour
Their plaintive Sighs, whoſe Patron is no more?
To what Example ſhall the Parents turn
Their riſing Offſpring, loſt to his we mourn?

To whom, for Council, ſhall the Doubtful fly?
To whom, for Comfort, ſhall the Griev'd apply?
Where ſhall a Friend, a faithful Friend be found?
And how ſhall matchleſs, full DESERT be crown'd?
So oft our Grave-ſtones fail the bad Man's Truſt,
Suſpicion lights upon the good Man's Duſt;
So oft the Poets proſtitute their Lays,
'Tis hard, from Flatt'ry, to diſtinguiſh Praiſe:
True Merit rear'd upon its own firm Baſe,
No adulating Monument can grace:
Virtue, like CHUBB's, muſt ſuffer by Extreams,
To gild the Brilliant clouds it's radiant Beams.
His WORKS, the Mirror of his nobler Mind,
Thro' lateſt Ages ſhall inſtruct Mankind,

Who

Who, if a ſeeming Blemiſh they perceive,
Will pity Human Frailty and—forgive.

THIS feeble Verſe, the Tribute of Eſteem,
Can add no Luſtre to it's glorious THEME.
With Love of Truth, no meaner Motive, fir'd,
The Muſe proclaims that GOODNESS ſhe admir'd:
Yet ſhould the ſlaviſh Bigot do her wrong,
Ye Sons of Freedom, vindicate the Song.

THE END.

P. S. Mr. CHUBB's Body, was, by his own Choice, depoſited next the Remains of his Valued Friend, Mr. *Lawrence*, in the Church-yard of *St. Edmond's*, in this City.

A VINDICATION OF THE MEMORY OF Mr. *CHUBB*,

FROM THE

Scurrilous and groundleſs Calumnies ſuggeſted by a late infamous LIBEL.

In two genuine LETTERS to the ſcandalous LIBELLER. The firſt from *J——n L——le*, one of the People called *Quakers*, reſiding in *Saliſbury*; and the other from a *Moral Philoſopher*.

Whoſo diggeth a Pit ſhall fall therein; and he that breaketh a Hedge, a Serpent ſhall bite him.

SOLOMON.

Their Envy's like an Arrow ſhot upright,
That in the Fall endangers their own Heads.

JOHNSON.

LONDON:

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[Price Six Pence.]

LETTER I.

FROM

One of the People commonly called QUAKERS.

FRIEND H———R,

HERE is lately come out a Pamphlet, called MEMOIRS OF THOMAS CHUBB, *&c.* which has been read by many, and, as far as I can learn, diſliked by them all; the general Report is that thou art the Author thereof: If ſo, I would offer a few Things to thy Conſideration, which, as they are deſigned for thy Good, I hope, may meet with thy kind Acceptance. And,

I WOULD obſerve to thee, in the firſt Place, that, as thou art one of thoſe who are called *Clergymen*, thy Performance ſhould have comported with that Character, and thou ſhouldeſt

have diſcovered in it a Regard to Truth and Decency; but thou greatly diſguſteſt thy Readers, by giving a licentious Indulgence to thy carnal Paſſions, which have hurried thee on to the fouleſt Exceſſes. Thy Language is not ſuited to thy Vocation, but rather beſpeaks thee to be one of that idle Band of Men, now in this Place, who call themſelves *Comedians:* And greatly am I miſtaken, if they have not ſpoiled a *good Player* to make of thee a *naughty Preacher.*

SUFFER me to point out to thee thy Errors, with Reſpect to the Man whom thou haſt ſo much abuſed in thy Writings. I tell thee, Friend, he was not ſuch an one as thou repreſenteſt him to have been. Even I, and many of our Friends, who did not approve of ſome of his Opinions, for that they ſwerved from the Truth, had a Value and Love for him (although he wrote againſt us) becauſe, by his Behaviour, he had obtained a *good Report*, and we perceived that *he walked honeſtly*; *not in* RIOTING *and* DRUNKENNESS; *not in* CHAMBERING *and* WANTONNESS; but according to the Light that was in him. As I hope the Candle of the Lord, or what thou mayeſt call thy Reaſon, is not yet quite extinguiſhed within thee, bring THY Actions to that Light, and ſee if it will juſtify thee in attempting to fix the moſt odious Scandal on a Man whoſe Life was irreproachable and upright, and whoſe Death,

Death, notwithſtanding thy fooliſh Mockery, was Peace.

THOU, indeed, doſt repreſent his Death as *ſhocking and full of Horror, moſt tragical and deeply affecting*. But tho' this is too groſs for the moſt credulous Fools, except thyſelf, to believe; yet, if thou thoughteſt it ſo tragical, why waſt thou for improving upon it? For thou had'ſt in thine Eye ſome Circumſtances, which, had they been added, would have made the Judgment much compleater, and the Tragedy more to thy liking; and thou ſeemeſt quite vexed with thy Maker becauſe he omitted them: However, thou haſt taken care that the World ſhould not loſe the fine Reflections thou waſt capable of making in that Caſe. Thou ſayeſt (Page 50) "He was but juſt returned "from the Neceſſary-houſe, before his Death "happened, where, had he ſtaid but a few "Minutes longer, he had breathed his laſt. "And Pity indeed it is, as his Fate was ſo "near at hand, that he had not ſtaid where "he was, a Minute or two longer, that his "End might have been of a piece with his "Beginning, and that he might have died, "as he had lived, in a Stink." I was willing to quote thine own Words on this Occaſion, becauſe they contain in them the very *Flower* and *Quinteſſence* of thy DUNGHILL WIT.

THOU pretendeſt that one of *Thomas Chubb*'s Friends was guilty of an indecent and wicked Action, and from thence inferreſt that himſelf

alſo muſt be guilty of the like Practice. Thou blind Guide! Wilt thou admit of *this* Concluſion from me, that, becauſe thy Brother *William* (one likewiſe of thy own Coat) was convicted, at our Aſſizes, of committing a *Rape* on the Body of a Woman, therefore thyſelf alſo art accuſtomed to commit Rapes? Verily, Friend, thy School-learning hath made thee mad; and never did Picture better reſemble the Original than *Solomon*'s *Madman* doth *thee*, of whom he ſaith, *He caſteth about Firebrands, Arrows and Death; and ſaith, am I not in Sport?*

I WILL now tell thee what ſome have ſaid of thy Performance, who are not a Whit behind thee in their Zeal for *Orthodoxy*; though, I truſt, they have a meaſure of that illuminating Spirit, which teacheth Meekneſs and Forbearance towards one another, to which thou ſeemeſt to be altogether a Stranger---One of theſe Perſons ſaid, that "thou oughteſt to "be thraſhed, if thou couldeſt not make good "thy Charge againſt the Man," which thou well knoweſt thou art not able to do: Now, as this Puniſhment requireth an *Arm of Fleſh* to execute it, I cannot approve thereof, but ſhall content me with ſaying, *the Lord rebuke thee Satan!* Another ſaid, "if thou *couldeſt* have "proved what thou haſt alledged againſt him, "it was a baſe Thing of thee to fall ſo foul on "the Aſhes of the Dead." As I am informed theſe Sayings came from Men of thine own Order, I thought they might have ſome Weight

Weight with thee; and, in Truth, I have not met with one, even among thoſe who are accounted the moſt orthodox, who was not greatly ſcandalized at thy Performance.

It is ſuggeſted, that thy Reſentment was kindled againſt *Thomas Chubb*, for ſaying of thee, in one of his Books, *that thou waſt fitter to ſing a* Love-Song, *or dance a* Horn-Pipe, *than to reaſon on Queſtions of a ſerious and important Nature.* I acknowledge, *Thomas* would have been blame-worthy for ſpeaking thus of thee, if it was not literally true; but, I aſſure thee, 'tis the Opinion of moſt People, in this Neighbourhood, that he has hit thy Character herein to a very Hair. For my own Part, *Joſeph*, I verily believe, that, if thou waſt to be tried in the ſame Manner with thy *Name-ſake of old*, thou wouldeſt act a very different Part from him, and take more Care of thy *Garments**. If, in thus judging, I have wronged thee, I ſhall be ſorry for the ſame, and will readily retract it, when convinced of the wrong; for I always bear in Remembrance, what I now alſo recommend to thy Conſideration, that *both he that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the Juſt, are an Abomination to the Lord.*

Read over, I pray thee, thy Pamphlet, in thy sober Hours, and conſider if thou haſt not given juſt Occaſion for whatever may ſeem harſh and diſpleaſing to thee in *this Letter*: Eſpecially read that part of it which relates to *Thomas Chubb's* Burial, and the treatment thou

* *Gen.* xxxix. 12.

wouldſte

wouldeſt have exerciſed on his dead Body, and on the Bodies of all thoſe whom *thou deemeſt Hereticks*; and then tell me, if thou can'ſt find any Thing like it, either practiſed or recommended by *Jeſus Chriſt* or his *Apoſtles* towards their moſt implacable Enemies? Nay, look into the Writings of the Heathens, which (notwithſtanding thy affected Reverence to *Chriſt*) thou ſeemeſt to be much better acquainted with than his *Goſpel*, and ſee if thou can'ſt find any ſingle inſtance of Behaviour, in them, half ſo heatheniſh and barbarous as this? No, it could only proceed from a mind *black as thy Coat* and *ſpiteful as Hell*; and tho' thou mayeſt eſteem it a Proof of thy ſuperior Wiſdom; yet, let me tell thee, 'tis Wiſdom that *proceedeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, Deviliſh.* And if thou wouldeſt thus wreak thy Malice on dead Bodies that can no longer oppoſe thee, what may not the Living, and eſpecially we, whom thou calleſt Quakers, and who bid Defiance to thy antichriſtian Principles and practices; I ſay, what may not *we* expect at thy Hands, if thou had'ſt Power over us, but Tortures and Deaths as yet unexperienced by the Children of Men? O my Friends! let us pray, that God would bleſs and preſerve GEORGE our King, and all other our Governors, by whoſe Clemency we are permitted to worſhip *God* according to the light of *our own Minds*, and by whoſe Power we are protected, in ſo doing, from the Fury of thoſe *whoſe tender mercies are cruel.*

WHILST

WHILST I was writing the above Lines, I was informed that an anſwer is preparing to be made to thy Pamphlet; but what will be ſaid therein OF THEE, or TO THEE, I know not. I own, if thou had'ſt Modeſty enough left to render thee ſenſible of Shame and Remorſe, I ſhould be in ſome Pain for thee: But, as thou haſt entrenched thyſelf in *Impudence* and made thee a covering of *Defiance*; and as thy *Reputation*, even amongſt thoſe of thy own *Order*, is almoſt at an End, thy Sufferings cannot be ſo great as to excite Pity on that Account, however thou mayeſt be expoſed to the World.

I SHALL add no more, at this Time, but pray that thou will look *into thyſelf*, and ſee what Manner of Spirit thou art of; and may the Father of Light guide thee into the way of Truth and Righteouſneſs! And mayeſt thou from henceforth learn, that *God is no reſpecter of Perſons, but that, in every Nation, he that feareth God and worketh Righteouſneſs will be accepted by him.* That *Thomas Chubb*, whom thou in thy Folly condemneſt, both feared God and worked Righteouſneſs, is well known to us; and, I truſt, he hath his Reward, in that peaceful and bliſsful State above, to which thy future Conduct, I alſo pray, may make thee worthy of being admitted, with him and all good Men. So I bid thee farewell, and am

thy Friend,

J——L——LE.

SALISBURY the 23d *day of the 7th-month, called* September.

POSTCRIPT

POSTSCRIPT *to the* READER.

READER, *I entreat of thee two Things*, Firſt, *That thou read over the Libel or Pamphlet which occaſioned the foregoing Letter, from which thou wilt be able to judge whether I have wronged the Libeller by any Thing I have therein ſaid. And as thou wilt find that the Poiſon of Aſps was in his Heart, and under his Lips, when he penned it; ſo it may ſerve to keep thee on thy Guard againſt Serpents ſo venemous and deadly.* Secondly, *If thou art a Stranger to this Part of the Country; and conſequently, unacquainted with the moral Character of* Thomas Chubb; *believe not the Report of his* Enemy *concerning it, till ſuch Time as he hath proved his wicked Suggeſtion, or till thou haſt made a due Enquiry; and this laſt thou mayeſt eaſily do, if thou haſt any Acquaintance in, or about* Saliſbury; *where there are many hundred Perſons of the higheſt Reputation, who will readily teſtify, that his Manners were pure and incorrupt, and his whole Behaviour not unworthy of the beſt Chriſtian; and that the inſinuations of his being addicted to an* unnatural Vice, *or of his maintaining an intimacy with thoſe he knew to be* ſo, *is utterly falſe, ſcandalous and malicious.*

LETTER

LETTER II.

FROM A MORAL PHILOSOPHER.

SIR,

I have read over your *virulent Libel* on the Memory of Mr. CHUBB. I think it has not its equal for *Detraction*; at leaſt I never read the like; nor do I think more *Envy* ever lodg'd in any Breaſt, or *blacker Calumny* dropt from any Pen than your's. I am ſure, it muſt be look'd upon with Scorn and Contempt, all over the Kingdom, except it chance to fall into the Hands of Creatures like *Thee*, if any can be found, ſo impious in Nature, ſtupid in Underſtanding, and debauch'd in Morals: A fit Perſon for ſuch a Work! A proper Work for ſuch a *Parſon*, as I hear you are, to the Scandal of your Cloth and Chriſtian Profeſſion! I ſhould not have taken Notice of your *invidious Piece*, but to do Juſtice to the *Innocent*, who being dead cannot defend himſelf; and to you, that you might not go off with Impunity.

No ſooner was Mr. *C.* laid in his Grave, but your Malignity againſt him appeared. Your foul-mouth'd Malice ſays, (and what will not foul-mouth'd Malice ſay) concerning

Mr. *Monday* a School-Maſter, and Mr. *Laurence* a Tallow-Chandler, (*p.* 9) Theſe were the *earlieſt* and *moſt intimate* of his (*T. C*'s) Acquaintance, and *dear-bought* Acquaintance they were, ſeeing that *they corrupted each other, and ſtrengthned their Hands in Wickedneſs, till their abominable Sin broke out.* But tell the World, baſe Inſinuator! When, and how, did their abominable Sin break out? And what you mean by it? I ſhould have thought this but a Reflection on their *Belief*, if more glaring Inuendo's did not appear, as follow.

(*P.* 43) *But how much ſoever they may cry up the Purity and unblemiſh'd Honeſty of Mr.* Chubb, *his* moral Character *does not ſtand ſo very clear and unexceptionable as his Friends would have us believe it to be. If he had the* ſeeming Sanctity *of* Socrates, *he is foully belied if he had not his* Vices *too.* Some malignant and contemptible Prieſt, like *thee*, might belie *him* too.

In running through all the Commandments, (*p.* 45) to load him with an Imputation of *ſome* Guilt, you clear him from the Charge of *any*; unleſs (as you would have it) he broke 'em all *ſpiritually*, except the Seventh; upon which, you ſay, *he did not commit* Adultery; *no, nor* ſimple Fornication: *But he herded with* S——tes *and was deemed* one *himſelf.*

There are other places, where you repeat Inſinuations of the ſame Tendency, but *theſe*

are

are enough to ſhew your *Spirit* and your *Meaning*. Now, what can be ſaid or done to clear the Character of the Deceaſed from the Ignominy you have caſt upon it, but to provoke you to produce your Vouchers? And unleſs you do ſo, you ought to be ſhunn'd by Mankind as a Peſt to Society; none of your Neighbours knowing whoſe Turn it may be next to come under the Laſh of your Slander. Let me tell you, Sir, if you cannot make your Allegation good, you ought to be ſtript of your canonical Robes, on a Scaffold erected for that purpoſe, before the Houſe where the accuſed lived, that the Church be not ſcandalized by a *Son that cauſeth Shame*,

You muſt ever expect to be deſpiſed by all ſober thinking Men, as the Author of the Reproach, unleſs you publickly declare who you had your pretended Information from; becauſe the World will otherwiſe ſay, it is your own Invention, and diſcover the Truth without your telling it. Publiſh your Authors therefore, and clear yourſelf from being the only Author of this Tale, or you will be juſtly deemed to be as bad as you repreſent *Chubb* to have been; and all your *Friends* will ſhare in the Diſgrace: You had better clear and clean yourſelf than defile *them* with your Filth, and make *them* your Enemies; every one of them elſe will be ſuſpected to be the Author, if you are not the only one.

After you have charged him with the *Vices* as well as the *ſeeming Sanctity* of *Socrates*,

before-mention'd, you go on. *This indeed has been talk'd of more freely ſince his Death than before.* But by whom beſides yourſelf? Are not you the principal and only original Author? You ſay, *You never heard an Inſtance charged upon him till about twelve Years ſince.* What was that Inſtance? Confeſs freely to the World before you leave it? Or expect to be damned by it while you are in it, whatever may become of you afterwards; for depend upon it, your Soul will not be worth ſaving, unleſs they receive ſpiritual Dung in the Regions above. You proceed inſinuating that *you ſuſpected it near theſe thirty Years, as did many others beſides yourſelf.* What Reaſon had you to ſuſpect it? You could have *none*, having a Skull empty of all Reaſon. Who were thoſe *many others that ſuſpected it beſides yourſelf?* Diſburden your Conſcience, Man, and don't go to Hell for keeping the Devil's Secrets. *There were* (you continue) SUPPOSED *to be a Knot of them, all ſworn Brethren and Diſciples of his (i. e.* Chubb's) Is all this Evidence come to a malicious SUPPOSITION at laſt? No wonder, there was no more in it at firſt. *The C's,* you ſay, *were as much talk'd of then as now, viz.* Chubb, C——s *and* C——y, *all ſince dead, beſides ſome yet living, who ſhall be nameleſs.* So all the *C*'s in that Country muſt go under the Suſpicion of Guilt, from your villanious Inſinuation! Was there ever ſuch a *C.C.* that is, *Calumniating Coxcomb?* Certainly all the living *C*'s will

will curſe thee. Undoubtediy, thou haſt raiſed up a great *C.* againſt thee, that is, *Complaint*, which may end in thy own *C.* that is, *Confuſion*; and if ſo, *C.* that is, *Chriſt*, have Mercy on thee; for verily thou haſt blaſphemed the firſt Letter of his holy Name. *It is hard*, you add, *to produce Proofs of this Kind where there is a Body of them confederated.* And who but a *Gallows Prieſt*, would dare to inſinuate things of this Kind, that he could not prove? If any ſuch Confederacy there was, you or your Informer muſt have been of the Number; for you ſay, that *Secrecy and Silence generally attend ſuch Works of Darkneſs*; therefore you or he muſt have been a Child of Darkneſs to be acquainted with it, if true; and of the Devil, if falſe. For *the Actors*, you ſay, are *behind the Curtain, and are too deeply intereſted themſelves to talk aloud.* Infamous Miſcreant! *Yet hard as it is*, (ſay you) *I have three or four living Witneſſes to produce againſt one of them, the moſt intimate, and if I may ſay, Boſom Friend of Neighbour* Thomas's. But Neighbour *Thomas* had no ſuch Boſom Friend. I have *living* and *credible Witneſs* to prove, that Mr. *Chubb* ſhunn'd all manner of Correſpondence with a Perſon ſo ſcandalized, as ſoon as he heard it, whether there was any juſt Foundation to credit the Scandal or not. But ſuppoſing it true, that one of *T. C*'s Diſciples was more unnaturally lewd than yourſelf, how is your Concluſion juſt? That *if this does not amount to*

a real Proof, yet that it falls but little ſhort of it; i. e. *it muſt be allowed to be a ſtrong preſumptive Evidence, becauſe Birds of a Feather will flock together*. Shallow Reaſoner! To apply the Argument, you accompany Jail-birds and Felons, therefore you are a Felon by the ſame Rule: You have attended ſeveral of them to the Gallows, I ſuppoſe, as 'tis your Buſineſs to do, therefore you deſerve to be hanged. Suppoſing this to be true, the Reaſon is falſe. I am ſorry you ſhould underſtand Reaſoning and Logic no better. Was not one of Chriſt's Diſciples a *Thief* and a *Traitor?* Were therefore *Chriſt* himſelf and all his Apoſtles *Thieves* and *Traitors?* Chriſt kept Company with *Publicans* and *Sinners*; was he therefore a *Publican* and a *Sinner?* And becauſe he was crucified between two *Thieves*; was he eſteem'd a *Thief?* If any Part of the Goſpel belongs to you, it is the excrementitious Part only, if ſuch there be. For all that you touch are defiled. You own it is a *dirty Subject*; and *You* only have made it ſo. It had been clean enough if you had not handled it: your Fingers have made your *Memoirs* filthy by the Foulneſs of your Inſinuation. But now 'tis out, impeach your Confederates in Iniquity, if you have any, and ſave your own Reputation from being hanged, to ſkreen and favour them. This I hope you will do, as you fear *God* and the *King*. This you ought to do, as your are a *Prieſt*, though an *Ordinary Prieſt*; and you ſhould

do

do that good thing yourſelf, you perſwade others to do. You have ſinned before the World, and therefore you ought to confeſs before the World, that your Soul may be ſaved in the Day of the Lord Jeſus; unleſs you are ſuch an Infidel as to believe that Day will never come. You have, no doubt, in the Diſcharge of your Duty, told *other Criminals* of that Day, and ſhewn the Neceſſity of Confeſſion and Repentance. If you believe what you teach, you know you muſt practiſe it, or be damned; and if you do not believe, you muſt be damned for being an Hypocrite and an Infidel. Therefore, you are now in a hopeful Condition, and reduced to the Neceſſity either to confeſs and be hanged, or confeſs not and be damned. What a pretty Pickle have you brought yourſelf into? When the Devil has drawn his Servants into a Scrape, they ſay, he always leaves them in the Lurch. And conſider this in Time, that your black Robes won't prevent you from going among your black Friends. If you ſhould plead, *Lord, Lord, have I not preached in thy Name, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works,* (ſuch Works as the World wonder'd you was not aſham'd to do) 'twill but aggravate your Miſery. Your Maſter will repeat his careleſs Anſwer, *I know you not.* Now, Sir, I have given you the friendly Word of Exhortation, and adviſe you to receive it in a friendly manner; preſuming myſelf for this Reaſon to be highly

highly in your Reverence's Favour. I intend to ſtick as cloſe to you, as your Memoirs did to your Fingers Ends in writing them, *ſpiritually* I mean. And laying a-ſide Seriouſneſs, which never agreed with your Conſtitution, I intend to be on your Side, in the reſt of your Work; and therefore, fear nothing, ſince you have ſuch a Hero as I am to *back* you; if you ſhould declare openly, by way of Gratitude, you are as willing to *back* me in what I write, the foul-mouth'd World will whiſper, that we are greater than we ſhould be, tho' we are more than ſeventy Miles a-ſunder.—Now that I may ſhew you how much I am you Friend, I intend, like you, to put on an impudent Front, and defend your Cauſe, which is bad enough, and therefore wants a good Defender, in hopes you'll be a Convert too, and hereafter be what you never yet was, that is a good Man.

WELL then I congratulate you upon the Death of Mr. *Chubb*, that *Arch-Heretic*, who is gone to his long home at laſt. Indeed, 'tis pity he ever lived to underſtand *writing*, or *reaſoning*. However, to that grim Prince of Terrors, to whom all muſt bow, *T. Chubb* has bowed his Head and is gone. Gone, God knows where! As you obſerve, (p. 57) *When we die where we go we have no Senſe to know.* But then, Sir, the next Words are not *apropos*, *for a B——d* (Bawd I ſuppoſe you mean) *always dies in her Drink:* For *T. Chubb*, you know, was a very

ſober

ſober Man. 'Tis a Misfortune, that many, when they have done or ſaid well, never know when to ſtop, till they have over-turn'd all by over-acting their Part. Indeed, if you had ſaid any Thing *well*, I ſhould have thought this to have been your Caſe; but as that can't be ſaid of any Part of your *Memoirs*, the Conſequence is not applicable to you. 'Tis your *great Modeſty* ſpoils all, you ſhould not only have written *Bawd* at length, but have proved that *Tom Chubb* was an old Bawd; for as he was ignorant of Genders, you know, he might as well have been a Bawd, as what you accuſe him of. Is it not ſtrange, that a Man of your *natural Parts* and Acquirements in *natural Knowledge* and *Rules* of *Genders*, ſhould be ſo exceſſive baſhful, as by it to ſpoil a good Jeſt. Some think you are deficient in *Courage* too; becauſe you did not attack him in his Life time, and prove to his Face, that he was a *Backſlider and afraid of the Face of a Man*; and for that Reaſon all that knew him, know that you was afraid of *his* Face, and are *a rank Coward*, and that all you have ſaid of him is *Backbiting*. But I in Charity am ſatisfied, you held your Pen till he could not write, purely to avoid Contention, you being a Diſpenſer of the Goſpel of peace; and your *uncommon Modeſty* induc'd you to be ſilent, 'till the Man was ſilent in his Grave. Beſides, your great *Chriſtian Meekneſs* avoided giving Offence even to your Enemy *T. Chubb*, tho' you know

how contemptuoſly he uſed you by Name in his Works: And therefore 'tis certain the greateſt Ignominy cannot be too vile to fix on him; but now *Chubb* is dead, there is nothing you ſay of him can give him Offence; you ſhow how *religiouſly* you would practice the Rules you have laid down in your *Memoirs* of hanging, mutilating, mangling, and burning the Carcaſſes of Hereticks, after Death, if it was in your Power; but for want of that Power you *righteouſly* do the ſame by his Soul, or what was as dear as his Soul to him in life, that is, his *moral Character*. But why ſhould a Heretic or an Infidel have any moral Character? If any one have, why ought it not to be damn'd as well as his Soul? The Church, you ſay, indulges *all that are ſo unhappy as to diſſent from her, to go to Heaven their own way*, therefore what can be more damnable than *Tom. Chubb*'s going to Church, eating her holy Bread and drinking her holy Wine as long as he had any Stomach for it; for this Cauſe, and for not leaving the Church, (*p.* 36) *he was certainly the moſt hardened, moſt abandoned, moſt incorrigible, inconſiſtent, ſelf-contradictory Hypocrite, that ever ſet Foot in a Chriſtian Church.* And therefore, I cannot but highly applaud your Reſolution and Bravery, who *would deliver over ſuch a Fellow to Satan, to be buffetted for a Seaſon*; you being the moſt proper Parſon to do it, having always that *Fellow, Satan*, at your Elbow; but yet your Modeſty again ſpoils all, for by the

Words

Words *for a Seaſon*, I know you mean, as long as any Life or Soul remain'd in him, you'd have him baſtinadoed; which if you had but ſpoke out, you had ſhown your great Self to be the *Orthodox Hercules* of the Age. For

To prove one's Doctrine Orthodox
By apoſtolic Blows and Knocks,

has been ever approved of by the moſt rigid Defenders of the Faith in all Ages. But your *Meekneſs* damns your whole Performance. Let me tell you, Sir, I am glad you mention'd the *old Man*, SATAN, to terrify the *Hereticks* and *Infidels* of the Age, and make the latter eſpecially ſtand in fear and tremble at *that dreadful Name* which keeps the believing World in awe; for Unbelievers would imagine there is no ſuch Thing, but that they know what ſuch conjuring Prieſts as you can do by the wonder working Power of eccleſiaſtic Authority, whenever you are indulg'd to exert it. Therefore 'twas ſaid in a *wiſe* and *godly* Manner; and when you have to do with *Infidels*, ſay ſo again.

In ſeveral Places you give us *T. Chubb*'s Character as a Writer; (in *p.* 26.) That he laid *about him with his Pen ſo furiouſly, and indiſcriminately, that like the great Leveller of Mankind, he ſpared neither Age, Sex, nor Condition.* (*p.* 33) *That he treacherouſly betrayed the Doctrines and Diſcipline of the Church into the Hands of its Enemies, made a Compliment of* Epiſcopacy *to the* Preſbyters, *and of* infant Baptiſm *to the* Baptiſts, *gave up the* Trinity *to the*

Arians *and* Mahometans, *the* Pre-exiſtence *of the* Son *to the* Socinians, *and the* Authority *of the* Scriptures *to the* Deiſts, *was utterly averſe to all the Church's* Articles *and* Confeſſions, *her* Creeds, *and her* Homilies, *her* Liturgy *and her* Sacraments, *and endeavoured by all Means poſſible to* undermine *and* ſubvert *them all* Root *and* Branch; and therefore muſt *be pronounced the* falſeſt *and moſt* perfidious Traytor, *the moſt* dangerous *and* invenomed Serpent *that ever Church took into her Boſom. That his* Reputation *for* Piety *and* Devotion *was founded on ſuch a Behaviour, as made all thinking ſober-minded Chriſtians tremble*; and ſince *it was an eaſy Matter for him to keep on as he began, and* preſerve *his Character by the ſame Means he acquired it, accordingly his* Demeanour *was of a Piece,* artful, ſtudied, reſerved, diſguiſed, *and his Diſcourſe* ſoft, ſmooth *and* oily; *ſo that none could ſuſpect any Evil where there was ſo good an Outſide.* That (*p.* 39.) *He was* forward, preſſing, intruding, *and gained Acceſs where otherwiſe he would have been debarred, and where admitted was* indefatigable *in making* Proſelytes, *which he ſeldom failed of.*—*And therefore no ſooner did any Stranger come to Town, but preſently he was honoured with a* Viſit *from Mr.* Chubb, *to welcome him, and by fair Speeches to get into his good Graces.*—That (*p.* 40.) *he was the* greateſt Monſter *that ever* Saliſbury, *or* Arabia *itſelf, ſince* Mahomet, *has produced*; which you, Sir, ſpeak *by Experience*; there having been *two Attempts* made by him and his Followers to transform

transform you into a reaſonable Creature; but your victorious Faith obliged them to retreat, and leave you the ſtupid Thing it found you, gaping and ſtaring on reaſonable Beings, as on Monſters foreign to your Conſtitution. And ſince Nature ſeemed to have done her perfect Work in him, by your Confeſſion, *(p.* 14.*)* ſo that his Morals *or* Behaviour, *either in* civil *or* ſocial *Life, was not any ways* abhorrent *from his other Character, which would have been incompatible with that of a* Reformer, *and ſubverſive of his own Scheme, for him to have been notorious for any* vicious *Habit*; and as he had from Dame Nature's Temperament, *(p.* 42.*) no Temptations to ſtruggle with, no Difficulties to encounter, no Deſires to be curbed, no Paſſions to be ſubdued, no Mortification or Self-denial, no Triumphs of Grace over Nature,* there being no need, as the Biaſs of his Inclinations was good, you having diſcharged him from the Breach of every Command in the Decalogue, except what you think will make him blacker than your black ſelf, and except *ſpiritually*, in every one of which you cannot lay your Hand upon your Breaſt, and ſay, *Not guilty upon my Reverence*; becauſe you know Hereticks do ſay your *Reverence* has been ſtained by the Breach of moſt of them. You add, That *(p.* 61.*) if* Chriſt *was the Sent of God,* Chubb *muſt have his Commiſſion from another Quarter*; *and if the* former *was not, the latter muſt be a Deceiver of the People. And* if *indeed thus far he made*

a bold Step towards ſharing our Saviour's Titles with him; that is, as Jeſus *was the Author, ſo* Thomas *would fain be the Finiſher of our Faith.* If *(p.* 46.*) he robbed* Chriſt *of his Divinity, and the* World *of a Saviour*; and *(p.* 76.*)* if *poſſible, he damned more than Jeſus ſaved*; then, I ſay, if *Chubb* was all this that you have mentioned of him, and was *(p.* 51.*) a Man of uncommon Genius and natural Capacities*, he was undoubtedly the ANTICHRIST mentioned in the New Teſtament, who has been by ſome Proteſtants thought to be the *Pope*; but now we perceive it was *unbelieving Thomas*, even THOMAS CHUBB: It is HE, to be ſure, that is ſpoken of figuratively in *Job*, by THE GREAT LEVIATHAN, and that is propheſied of in the *Revelations*, by the Name of THE BEAST, and THE FALSE PROPHET, and THE RED DRAGON that would have devoured the Woman and her Son, which ſignifies the Goſpel and the Church of *England:* For *Chriſtianity*, you ſay, Sir, *(p.* 31.*) is the pureſt Religion in the World, and the Church of* England *is the pureſt Church profeſſing that Religion.* From this Church, you knew *T. Chubb* ſaid, you had brought him to *Arianiſm*, from *Arianiſm*, to *Deiſm*, and from *Deiſm* had fixed his Head-Quarters at the infamous Town of *Atheiſm*, and that God knows whither you would next remove him. But this was the judicial Blindneſs of his own Eyes, in not ſeeing it was not in your Power to bring him there. No,

you

you only in tracing him, ſome-how loſt Sight of him in your Purſuit, and was miſtaken as to the laſt Place; for you own by theſe *Memoirs*, that he had not gone ſo far, but wanted juſt *an Inch* of it, *(p. 50.)* And becauſe you, Sir, walked ſo hard to that Town, thoſe that have look'd narrowly after you ſay, that you are a *practical* Atheiſt. But what won't the *Anti-goſpelites* ſay againſt ſuch bleſſed Defenders of the Goſpel as you are. Comfort yourſelf, dear Sir, with Chriſtian Patience, in which your precious *Memoirs* ſhew you abound. Sure enough, though you took up Quarters for him in the Town of *Atheiſm*; to be revenged of him becauſe he went not thither, you have removed him a great deal farther; for you have given him his Lot in the old burning Town that *Lot* fled from; and many an *Atheiſt* never Travels half ſo far. You know, Sir, that this *T. Chubb* was a proper Object of *Chriſtian Hatred*, and therefore you do well to *hate* him, and ſay all Manner of Evil againſt him that you have but the leaſt Hopes will ſtick, true or falſe; for what Vengeance is too great for one that was a *Hater of God and Chriſt*; and ſuch he was, ſince there was a deadly hatred between that *Antichriſt* and *you*, who are, or profeſs to be, one of *Chriſt's Miniſters*; and you know, Sir, *Chriſt* himſelf ſaid of *them, he that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me, and he that deſpiſeth me deſpiſeth him that ſent me*: And conſequently, you being in that Character,

this

this Matter is clearly made out, that *T. Chubb* was a Deſpiſer of *God*, becauſe he deſpiſed *you*, and was therefore a true Object of Chriſtian Hatred. Methinks I hear ſome ſimple Chriſtian objecting, that the Goſpel teaches *all Love*, even to our *Enemies*, therefore Hatred to none: Indeed it teaches its Followers *to love one another*, and to *love* their *Enemies*, but not *God's* nor *Chriſt's Enemies*. For (*Luke* xiv. 26.) *Jeſus ſaid to the Multitude if any Man come unto me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Siſters, yea and his own Life alſo, he cannot be my Diſciple:* which all Commentators underſtand to mean when they come in Competition with *Chriſt* or *his Doctrines*, but good *ſimple Chriſtians* do not underſtand the Command in this Senſe, becauſe they don't love to put it in Practice, as you do; but then, they ought to have this Precept the more ſtrongly inforc'd; not that I intend at this Time to be very *ſerious* in this Argument in your Defence, for that you never was in your Life, except in Malignity and Slander. It will be time enough to be more Serious, if any one, out of meer Malice to you, ſhould deny the Orthodoxy of the Doctrine; as I mention it purely in your Defence; for you cannot be defended in a Chriſtian Manner without ſome ſuch Doctrine. Therefore I hope no Good Chriſtian will take Umbrage at it; unleſs they are offended that *any Scripture* ſhould be brought to defend you, which

which I fear will be the Caſe. But if they pleaſe to allow, that *T. C.* was the GREAT ANTICHRIST foretold of, then ſure all the *Hatred* or *Malice* you have ſhown, Sir, againſt *Him* and *Hereticks*, is *Chriſtian Zeal for the Goſpel*, and may be vindicated by this Law; and by the ſame Law, all the *Effects* of Hatred for *Chriſt*'s ſake are juſtifiable. You have, therefore, Reverend Sir, been guilty of no Unchriſtian breach of Charity in ſhewing your Hatred againſt *T. Chubb*, and inſinuating that he was, what ſhocks me to Name; tho' no malicious Inſinuation ſhocks you. I know many Proteſtant Chriſtians, that are eſteemed very good Men by *Hereticks* and *Infidels*, cannot go the Length that you have gone in the *Obedience* of this Law; nor in the *Defence* of it as I have done; therefore you and I are *thorough-paced* Chriſtians, you in the *Practice* of this Precept, and I in its *Defence*; and having prov'd myſelf ſo much a *Chriſtian*, I ſhall not be afraid to permit you to gueſs at the Author of this Letter; and hope that the fear of *the Moral Philoſopher* will be more effectual to keep you from blaſpheming God and your Neighbour, than your fear of God or the Devil has hitherto done: The *M. P.* having ſilenc'd all his Antagoniſts. I hope, Sir, you will look upon me with a Chriſtian Eye, and conſider the Ties of our ſpiritual Kindred, for I intend to bear you Company in your *Memoirs* thro' thick and thin. And having laid ſo good a

Foundation, ſhall be able to juſtify every thing you have ſaid or done for the Cauſe of the Goſpel, I mean the Prieſthood. So each of us, conſidering our Union and Intereſt, hardened as we are, and without Compunction, may ſet our Hearts to Reſt: I in having revealed ſuch a Revelation; and you, O glorious Saint! in practiſing it. Tho' there are ſome Heretics and Infidels ſay, (for what will not Heretics and Infidels ſay againſt ſuch ſound Chriſtians as you and I are?) that you did not write this Book for the Goſpel's ſake, but for your own, in hopes of pleaſing ſome or one of your Superiors: and that what you ſtupidly inſinuate of the Deceaſed unqualified *T. Chubb*, (*P.* 47) is undoubted Truth reſpecting *yourſelf*, viz. *It is more than matter of Surmize, that you caſt a longing Eye at the Thrones and garniſh'd Stalls and Seats of Honour, which he* (T. C.) *ſpoke ſo diſdainfully and enviouſly againſt. Nor is it to be doubted, but that your Arrogance prompts you to believe you can fill ſome of them more worthily than they are at preſent.* And what ſufficiently confirms them in their Sentiments is, becauſe you treat ſome of them with ſeeming Contempt, particularly a worthy *Biſhop* now living, the late Dr. *John H*—— Archbiſhop of *A*—— and Dr. *Burnet* once Biſhop of *Sarum*; Names, they ſay, too pure for your filthy Mouth to pollute, tho' you endeavour at it; and theſe evil Inſinuations of yours againſt theſe great and good Men are, becauſe

the

the former promoted *Stephen Duck* to holy Orders, the next was a Friend to *T. C.* at his ſetting out, and the latter becauſe *Chubb* dedicated his firſt Book to him. But I am more inclined to think, it was becauſe they did not knock him on the Head. And I am of Opinion you had better ſpeak out, as I do, and not ſham the Matter. Sir *Joſeph Jekyll and his Lady* too are *wiſely* ſtigmatiz'd by you, for being his Friends; for why ſhould any *Chriſtian* be a Friend to him to whom you are ſo juſtly an Enemy on the ſcore of his being *Antichriſt*, and that he was, to be ſure, and an *Atheiſt*. I fancy ſome *old Heretic* or *arch Infidel*, is whiſpering in my Ear, that there are *no Atheiſts* in the World, nor ever were; but whoever you are whiſpering that, I tell you, there are *many Atheiſts* every where, for every one that does not worſhip and own the Gods of the Country, is an Atheiſt to them that do in that Country. So now your *Tom Chubb* is proved to have been an *Atheiſt*, and, brother Blunt, you and I are in the right of it then, to call him ſo.

Mr. CHUBB choſe a ſudden Death, and had it, at which you make a moſt woful Outcry, as if it was the effect of *divine Vengeance*; tho' one would think it a *divine Mercy* rather to die as one deſires. However ſince this ſhocks you ſo terribly, my Friend, perhaps you may have the Time to prepare your guilty-ſelf as others have had whom you have help'd to prepare,

that you my die *uprightly*. You know they have a precious Opportunity for preparing themſelves whoſe preſent State is not diſturbed with Sickneſs or any other Pain, but that of a *certain and approaching Death*. His Death cannot be ſudden that has Time to prepare for it, tho' he be *hang'd*.

As I profeſs myſelf your Friend no leſs ſincerely than you profeſs theGoſpel, I ſhall point out ſome *Errors* in your *Memoirs*, which no doubt are the diſmal Demonſtrations of your Ignorance. You tell us that Mr. *Chubb and his little religious Society (p 14) fell from their firſt Purity, thro' a falſe Perſuaſion that they could nor err whilſt their Intention was pure.* How could they? You, I preſume, Sir, think Ignorance and Purity are the ſame Thing; and if ſo, you being *very ignorant*, think yourſelf *pure*. You wiſely obſerve that *our firſt Parents were expell'd Paradice thro' too prying a Curioſity*; this will do to keep all the Souls under your Cure as ignorant as the Curate; and then (p. 63) they will *be modeſtly content to receive Inſtruction from the Mouth of the Prieſt*, ſuch an *humble* and *underſtanding* Prieſt as you are.

By-and-By (p. 13.) You ſay, Sir, *they began to entertain an Opinion of their own Sufficiency, and ſhake off their Guides, and to lean to their own Underſtanding*. *Dear Brother*, we well know there is nothing more deſtructive of, *Prieſtcraft*, than this of Mens making uſe of, and conducting themſelves by their *own Underſtandisng*,

ſtandings; by this Means they *ſee*, and as ſoon as they begin to ſee really, they ſee their Guides are generally ignorant of the Knowledge of Truth, and that *their Seers are Blind.* There is not a more terrible *Monſter* to a *Prieſt* than *mental Light.* It is *eccleſiaſtical Rebellion*, and ſufficient of itſelf to overturn any Church in Chriſtendom. 'Tis the ſure Road to *Hereſy* and *Infidelity*, inſomuch that I never knew a Perſon but, as ſoon as he begun to apply his Mind to diligent Enquiry, and to be regardful to improve his own Underſtanding, always bid an eternal farewell to what is called *Oxthodoxy*: And generally unlearn'd what he had been learning from his *ſpiritual Paſtors and Maſters* all his Life long before. There are but two Ways; we muſt either lay down our Underſtanding at the Footſtool of Faith, and *not preſume to be wiſe above that which is written, be modeſtly content to receive Inſtruction from the Mouth of the Prieſt*, and be *Fools* for *Chriſt's* or rather for the *Prieſt's* ſake; or we muſt be *wiſe* for our *own* ſakes, be unconfin'd in our enquiries, then we ſhall ſoon be unbound by *Articles of Faith*; and they muſt be made to ſubmit to our Underſtandings; then alas! it generally happens that our *old Faith* and our *new underſtanding* differ entirely, and never agree more. This is the miſerable Conſequence of the Man that maketh not *the Prieſt his Strength*, and his *divine Oracle*; and that putteth not his abſolute Confidence in his *ſpiritual Dictator*. Then,

as

as you well expreſs it, they do, like *T. C.* and his Followers, *grow ſqueamiſh in their Faith, and will not ſwallow what they cannot digeſt.* Tho' certainly they that do, are made ſick by it, if they have any Senſe of Feeling; not having a Stomach like *thee*, ſtrong enough to digeſt Poiſon; and therefore they are not able to ſwallow *myſterious Nonſenſe, holy Lies, and hard-mouth'd Slander*, as you can. Theſe things are indigeſtible ſtuff to all ſenſible Men. However, the irreconcileable Contradictions, unſurmountable to human Underſtandings, that Cuſtom makes current, they put the beſt Senſe they can upon, and ſo patch up and wear the tatter'd Garment of a traditional Faith as long as it will hold together.

You diſcharge him of the Guilt of *carnal* Vices, which deſtroys your whole Inſinuation. And, as for the ſpiritual Vices that you accuſe *T. Chubb* of (*p.* 43.) all Men can ſee them reigning in *you, my dear Brother*, but yourſelf. You ſay, *if therefore* VICES MERELY SENSUAL AND CARNAL AS SUCH ESCAPED HIM, *they were abundantly made up by thoſe of a blacker Dye, ſuch as Pride, Arrogance, Self-conceit, a contempt of others, Malice, Revenge*, &c. *Vices altogether Spiritual and Diabolical.* And beſides theſe, Sir, I wiſh that Vices merely *Senſual and Carnal* had eſcaped you. But why is your Reverence aſham'd to own your *Function?* You ſay, concerning reading Grace over the Grave, (*p.* 65) *Nor would I*, if I was a Clergyman, *proſtitute*

proſtitute my ſacred Function to the favour of the greateſt Patron in Chriſtendom. And again (*p.* 64) *Sure I am*, had I been Miniſter of any Pariſh, *I would as ſoon have read the Service over* Tray, *as over him; and I think I could have juſtified it to my Conſcience full as well.* Why *Friend*, are you afraid it did him any good? Or would it do you any hurt to get the Pence? You ſay *the Service is not applicable to the Perſon.* You mean, I ſuppoſe, you tell a *Lie* in applying it. But when Money for ſo doing is applyed to your Hand, don't you feel the Truth of it in your Fingers? Do you know any other *Truth*? Or did you ever ſeek to know any *rational* and *divine Truth?* Can you not as well lie in the *Church-Yard* as elſewhere; and juſtify it to your Conſcience full as well? Does your Conſcience ſpoil your ſwallow? It cannot ſpoil your Digeſtion. Is not this Service in particular, a meer Form and Ceremony? Bawds talk of their Modeſty, juſt as you do of Conſcience, merely to ſave an Appearance, for

Bawds, they ſay, can pray *upon Occaſion,*
Turn up their goggling Eye-balls, rail at Vice,
Diſſemble, lie, *and* preach *like any* Prieſt.

What you call Conſcience, Friend, in this Point, is nothing but *rank Pride* and *obſtinate Malice.* Do you ever make uſe of it in other Affairs? Does your Conſcience ever boggle at your Luſts? Is it not a Slave to your Paſſions?

Conſcience

Conſcience, rightly underſtood, is a Knowledge equal to Demonſtration, or what is ſelf-evident. But your Conſcience is fit to make you a Prieſt of the Inquiſition; it can ſwallow all the Impoſitions of *Rome* to advance your Pride and Covetouſneſs; and can it not digeſt the moſt ſcandalous Perſecutions of Conſcience, and what not Enormities which ſtand in the Way of your Luſts and Paſſions? Has it not digeſted the ten Commandments? Examine yourſelf,

1. Do you not worſhip more Gods than one?

2. Have you not made to yourſelf a God in the Image of Man; or do you not worſhip a Man for God?

3. Do you not profanely uſe the ſacred Name of God in common Converſation and to ſanctify Falſhoods?

4. Have you kept holy the Sabbath, or any other Day.

5. Are you not guilty of Undutifulneſs and baſe Ingratitude to your widowed Mother?

6. Have you not Malice in your Heart againſt *Chubb* and his Friends, which is Murder in Nature tho' not in Power?

7. Have you not Reaſon to ſay *Lord have Mercy upon me* a miſerable Sinner! *And incline my Heart to keep this Law?*

8. If you never ſtole, have you not done worſe?

Who steals my Purse, *steals Trash*; 'tis something, nothing;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been Slave to Thousands:
But he that filches from me my good Name,
Robs me of that which not enriches *him,*
And makes me poor *indeed!* ——

9. Do you not bear false witness against *Chubb* and your Neighbours?

10. And have you not coveted your Neighbour's House, or his *Wife*, nor his Man Servant, or his *Maid* Servant, nor his Ox or his A—?

If you are guilty, then by these Breaches of the Decalogue, you have desecrated your holy Office more truly than the Corpse of *T. C.* has unhallowed the burying Ground, as you insinuate: For *what comes from the Heart pollutes the Man*, viz. *Evil Thoughts*, *Adulteries*, *Fornications*, *Covetuousness*, *Wickedness*, *Deceit*, *Lasciviousness*, *an evil Eye*, *Blasphemy*, *Pride*, *Foolishness*, and those *Thefts* and *Murders* that are *spiritual and diabolical.*

You would have *T. C*'s *Body to be taken up, and the Church Yard to be new consecrated.* What a Confession is this of the *Power* of a Heretic, that his meer dead Body is able to baffle the Power of the living Orthodox! agreeable to that Victory those Gentlemen ascribe to the Devil, more than they do to Christ; as the Women in their Songs did to *David* more than to *Saul*, a ten-fold *Conquest!*

Consecrating Earth, and whatever is dug out of it, is as ridiculous as *Romish Holy Water.* 'Tis at most but an *imaginary Holiness*, invented by

Knaves, and believed by Fools; which (by what you ſay) you judge to be *real* Holineſs; elſe why would you take ſuch pains to reconſecrate the Place you imagine to be unhallowed by the dead Body of an Infidel? Hence it is evident, you have no judgement what holineſs or unholineſs is, for you conceive what is fantaſtical only, to be real; and the real and perſonal Virtues of men to be only imaginary; ſo you cannot diſtinguiſh Falſity from Verity, nor even black from white, in ſpiritual Affairs. Men will therefore think, in ſpite of all I can ſay in your Favour, that you are a *blind Guide*, who *ſtrain at a Gnat and ſwallow a Camel*; and that one ſo ignorant and arrogant is very unfit to preach and write upon religious Subjects; that your Knowledge of Good and Evil is baſely corrupted by your bad Judgment and Practice, and the wrong Education and Learning you ignorantly value yourſelf upon. Thus indeed Religion is moſt baſely perverted by ſuch ignorant Pretenders, empty of all Godlineſs and all Knowledge of it. You inſiſting on a Holineſs the *Goſpel* knows nothing of, cannot poſſibly be a *Goſpel Miniſter*, and therefore may well be aſham'd to make a Profeſſion of it; for the leaſt glimmering of Reaſon does not appear in any part of your Performance, but inſtead thereof a dark and burning Zeal. (*p.* 64) *Truth*, as you ſay, *will out, and I cannot help it*; *if any one is agrieved, let him complain*; *I am ready to defend it:* Therefore, as you promiſe (*p.* 62) that *as ſoon as Mr.* Chubb's *Poſthumous Works appear, you will give the earlieſt and beſt Account of them*; I alſo promiſe you as ſuitable Return as lies in my Power: For as your Slander is the moſt envious, ſo your Reaſon, *dear Brother*, is unhappily the weakeſt of any Author's that ever I read; for though you labour hard at the one, you don't at all attempt the other. The Reflections you make on the Death of

Mr. *Chubb*, ſhew in a ſtrong Light your great Weakneſs. It ſeems to me (though I am ſorry to ſay it) *holy Prieſt*, that your Writings reſemble Hell the moſt of any Thing I ever read, having the two peculiar Qualities of it, *burning Heat* and *Egyptian Darkneſs*; an evident earneſt of ſomething elſe; they ſmell very ſtrong alſo of *Smoke* and *Sulphur*. *God avert the Omen!* (*p.* 50.)

You have indeed, *dear Brother*, ſhewn a bleſſed Orthodox Zeal againſt Heretics, ſuch as deſerves Praiſe from them, and from all Unbelievers; becauſe you have not Power, (thank the Majeſties of Heaven and Earth) to put it into Execution. I would have you read again your own Words, tho' chewing the Cud may not be very grateful to you, not being a clean Beaſt but an unclean. The Zeal you ſhew againſt proſtituting the Service for the Dead is eminent: And to be ſure, judging by your *Memoirs*, it is much better to ſay the greateſt Evil of a good Heretic, than the leaſt good Thing over his Grave; the holy Words in the Church Service, more eſpecially. Rather than repeat them over ſuch an Infidel as *Chubb*, ſay you, (*p.* 67.) *ſooner let me be driven a Vagabond and an Exile begging my Bread over the Face of the whole Earth; let my Children be fatherleſs, and my Wife a Widow; let me be cut to pieces, and my Houſe made a Dunghill and a piſſing Place for Jews and Stock-jobbers, than I ſhould offer ſuch Violence to my Conſcience; or ſo profanely join together what God has ſo widely put aſunder.* Ha! ha! ha! Why Jews and Stock-jobbers will piſs upon you living if you come in their Way, well knowing you have leſs Conſcience than they have, or, if you have any, 'tis an enormous one; 'tis a Conſcience that knows no mean. A Man whoſe Conſcience permits him to break all the Commandments in the Decalogue that ſtand in the Way of his Luſts, ſhould never talk of Conſcience

in reading the Leſſon over the dead. I never expected more Honeſty than appears, but more Senſe; where Reaſon is indeed wanting, every Grace is abſent. And all Jews and Stock-jobbers the Heterodox, and Infidels, laugh at your Zeal, and deride your Underſtanding or Ignorance, for 'tis all one. Every one will ſee your rage, who reads (*p.* 28, 29.) theſe Words of yours, *viz. We have ſeen a little Infidel courted, and made much of, by Men, otherwiſe of* Penetration *and* Diſcerment, *that in any other Age, or Country but ours, would at leaſt have had his Tongue bored thro' with a hot Iron, for the Twentieth Part of the Blaſphemies that he has vended in this.* The ſame Spirit appears in your laſt Words, or the laſt dying Speech of your *Memoirs*, (*p.* 67) *viz.*

" *As it is now too late to prevent the* Ceremonies *from being paid to one ſo great an* Enemy *to* Ceremonies, *and the Ground is already* unhallowed *by the Admittance of ſuch a profeſſed* Anti-Chriſtian *amongſt us; the only* Remedy *that can be propoſed at preſent is, that the Corpſe be taken up, and burnt, as* David George's *was by the Senate of* Baſil, 1556, *and the Church-yard conſecrated a-new by the Biſhop, as it certainly ſhould be, was it mine, before any Perſon ſhould be interred there who had* departed *this Life in the* Faith and Fear of Chriſt. *For why ſhould not their Bodies in Death be divided, whoſe Minds were as averſe as* Jocaſta's Sons *during Life? Or why ſhould he be acknowledged as* our dear Brother *when departed, who hated us, when preſent, with the hatred of a deadly Enemy. Let who will claim* Kin *with him for me,* I renounce *it for my own Part, with both my Hands; and I would ſooner* boaſt *my Pedigree from* Barabbas, *than acknowledge the leaſt* Affinity *between us.* ———"

" *Neither would it be unworthy the* Majeſty *of* Great Britain *to guard the* Majeſty *of* Heaven *from*

Inſult

Insult *as his own*; *to esteem the* Friends *of our most Holy Religion as his* best Friends, *her* Enemies *as his* Enemies, *and accordingly to* encourage, promote, discountenance, suppress, *that the* men of the Earth be no longer exalted against her. *This would add the* brightest *Jewel to his* Imperial Crown, *would truly constitute him, in* Fact, *as in Title, the* Defender of the Faith, i. e. *the Faith of a* Christian; *a Title the most* glorious *that any* Monarch *can wear on Earth, to which those of* Kings *and* Emperors, *of* Sultans *and* Cæsars, *if compared, shine but with* faint *and* diminished *Lustre.* ———"

"*As the* Infidel *hath the same Part with* him that believeth, *the same* Privileges *and* Immunities, *the same Advantages of* Commerce *and* Protection *from the* Government *during Life*; *it is absolutely requisite there should be made,* in imitation of divine Justice, *a manifest* Discrimination *between them after Death,* i. e. Infliction *of that Punishment which* Christian Lenity *with-held till then.*"

"*In order to this, I humbly propose to the* Public, *for the future, that whencver any* enormous overgrown Heretic, *such as* Chubb, *for Example, should make his* Exit, *instead of paying* Funeral Obsequies, *Notice should immediately be given to the* High-Sheriff, *who should be obliged to attend, with his* Posse-Comitatus, *on so extraordinary an Occasion, and authorized to demand the Body of the* Criminal, *and conduct it to* a sham Execution, *with all the Marks of* Infamy *and* Detestation; *viz. he should be drawn on a* Sledge, *like a* TRAITOR, *with an Halter about his Neck, by which he should be hanged the usual Time. From thence, when cut down, he should be carried to the Market-place, where a* Scaffold *should be erected for that Purpose, on which the Executioner, having made the* necessary Apparatus, *should, in the Sight of all the People, first* cut out his Heart, *that had contrived such horrid Blasphemies,*

mies, next pluck out the Tongue by the Roots *that had uttered them, and* then cut off the Right Hand *that had publiſhed them. The Body, thus mutilated, ſhould be taken down from thence, and* faſtened to a Stake hard by, *with all his* heretical Writings *called in, and gathered round him* into one Pile, *which, together with ſome Combuſtibles,* ſhould be kindled into a Blaze, *into which the* Heart and Tongue ſhould be caſt; there to continue till the whole was conſumed and reduced to Aſhes, which ſhould be thrown into the Air with all Contumely and Contempt, as unworthy of any Reſt or Repoſitory. *Such an harmleſs Execution as this, would take away all Clamour and Outcry againſt* Perſecution, *and would be attended farther with theſe ſalutary Effects: It would make all thoſe who* bow the Knee at the Name of Jeſus, *to lift up their long dejected Heads with Joy and great Gladneſs, to ſee that the Time is at length come, in which their Enemies were no longer ſuffered to triumph over them,* UNGODLY; *and the* Enemies of the Croſs, *who make ſuch proud Boaſtings, and ſpeak good of the* Infidel, whom God abhorreth, *were made to know themſelves to be but Men.*"

"THE Princes of the Iſles, and the Multitudes of them, even thoſe that are afar off, *ſhall hear and* fear, *and be* aſtoniſhed, *when they awake, as it were, from the Sleep of Death, and behold and ſee, that there is a* Ruler in Iſrael *who careth for theſe things, and that* his Zeal for the Lord of Hoſts hath done this."

"*So let all thine Enemies* periſh, *O Lord: But let them that love him be as the Sun, when he goeth forth in his Strength*; and let all the People ſay, *Amen,* with you and me.

Sign'd,

PHILALETHES ANTICHUBBIUS."

Mr.

Mr. *Antichubbius*, you forget to order one Ceremony concerning this *harmleſs Execution*, viz. that *the Ordinary of the County-Jail* ſhould be the *Prieſt*, attending the *Sacrifice*. But though you are *Antichubbius*, you are no *Philalethes*, no *Lover of Truth*. You have taken upon you a falſe Chriſtian Name, and ſo denied your Baptiſm, and conſequently are not *a Member of Chriſt*, nor *a Child of God*, nor likely to be *an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, whereinto*, (*Rev.* xxi. 27.) *ſhall in nowiſe enter any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie*. Your harmleſs Executions would tend to deſtroy Chriſtianity, not eſtabliſh it: For the Living would deride your Spleen, and laugh at your Power. The only Way is, to extirpate all *living Schiſmaticks*, and *Hereticks*, and every one that has the leaſt Grain of *Unbelief* about him, ſo as not to leave the Seed of Infidelity upon Earth; for if the Seed be left in any Part of the World, the Revolution of things, in Time, will ſpread it all the World over. To mangle *dead Bodies*, when it is only the *living Souls* offend, is ridiculous. Beſides, the very Aſhes toſſed up in the Air will have the Air of Infection, and propagate Hereſy.

Your Ideas of *the Majeſty of Heaven*, may ſeem like *your Reverence* to him, contemptible, and pitiful; that he ſhould be in ſo indigent a Condition, as to need the Aid of *earthly Majeſty to guard him from Inſult!* But I know, *Holy Father!* it is *the Majeſty of the Prieſt* you mean: Or if you have an Eye to any *God*, it is to *your great God* Mammon, ever adorable and beloved by *hireling Prieſts* above all Gods! Otherwiſe by your *Outcry* one would think the *Majeſty of Heaven* was in no leſs Danger from Infidels now, than from the *Babel-Builders*, or the *Titanians* of Old, or when "*Satan* with his "numerous Hoſts, wag'd dubious War in Hea-

"ven

"ven and Battle proud." *It might be well worth the Legiſlators while*, you think, *with all Submiſſion to the higher Powers be it ſpoken, to revive once more the decayed Spirit of Religion; and to ſcreen that ever venerable Name* (of Jeſus Chriſt) *from the Reproaches of Men of unclean Lips, and the Tongue that uttereth perverſe Things.* Submiſſion from you *to the higher Powers* is wonderful! He that adviſes others thinks himſelf wiſer than they. Many that cannot govern themſelves, nor act with any Conduct, think they are wiſe enough to direct their Superiors how to govern the Nation! As the Council of a Fool tends to his own Deſtruction; ſo does that of your Wiſdom; For if *the Magiſtrate ſhould revive the decayed Spirit of Religion*, then we have no Occaſion for *Prieſts*; for they that call on the *Magiſtrate* to do it, own themſelves are unqualified for the Work. If the *Magiſtrate is to ſcreen the ever venerable Name of Chriſt or God from the Reproaches* occaſioned *by Men of unclean Lips, and the Tongue that uttereth perverſe Things*; then ſurely *you* and every *pitiful Prieſt*, who have not *the Spirit of Religion*, and are guilty of profaning *the ever venerable Name of* God, may *with all Submiſſion* ſay with the Prophet, *I am a Man of unclean Lips*, and ſhould be thruſt out from preſuming to direct others in *the Spirit of Religion*, which neither you, nor they, have, or know, or practiſe the Duties of.

The Limits of my Paper prevent me from proceeding farther, tho' I have much more to remark which to you, *Sir*, of all Men, to be ſure would be moſt agreeable, and might be as profitable as *a Rod for the Fool's Back*. Therefore I now take my Leave of you in the Words of *Solomon. A Fool's Wrath is preſently known. He that uttereth Slander is a Fool. An ungodly Man diggeth up Evil; and in his Lips is a burning Fire.*

Not-

Notwithſtanding all the inveterate Malignity you have expreſſed to deſtroy the good Character of Mr. *Chubb*, you have by ſo doing advanced it, and deſtroy'd your own. For, *The Memory of the Juſt ſhall be bleſſed; but the Name of the Wicked ſhall rot.* Having inliſted and exerted my Abilities in your Service I claim the Freedom of ſubſcribing myſelf

Your Extraordinary Servant,

The MORAL PHILOSOPHER.

To Mr. CHUBB'*s* DETRACTOR.

By BRITANNICUS.

THE ſlimy Snail, that ſhrunk its ſpongy Head
At living Man, beſmears his Tomb, *when dead,*
So cloiſter'd Vermin, *fouler far in* Spirit,
Thruſt out their HOR*ns*, *a*LER*t*, *to ſoil his* Merit!
In vain! like Oil that fed the Veſtal *Fire,*
Such Venom makes CHUBB'*s Virtue blaze the higher.*

SINCE his *confounding Luſtre hurts thy Sight,*
Chatter in Darkneſs, like the Bird of Night.
But know thy hooting Malice, as it flies,
Betrays thee, black Aſſaſſin, in Diſguiſe,
A wanton PRIEST, *an Harbinger of* Lies.

N. B. There was no Conſpiracy between the *Friend* and the Moral Philoſopher, but each wrote as by Inſpiration, the one to propheſy, (*p.* 9.) and the other to accompliſh it.

FINIS.

A SECOND

LETTER

From one of the PEOPLE called

QUAKERS,

RESIDING IN

SALISBURY,

To the AUTHOR of a Pamphlet entitled,

MEMOIRS of *Thomas Chubb*.

LETTER II.

FRIEND,

SINCE my former Letter, I have read over *one* inſcribed to thee by a Man who ſtiles himſelf a *Moral Philoſopher*; and I was in hopes that, as ſuch, he would have dealt plainly and ſincerely with thee, by endeavouring to convince thee of thy many Errors, and reproving thee for thy immoral Treatment of the Character of *THOMAS CHUBB*. As I found little in his Performance that anſwered the Title he *aſſumed*, but that it rather ſavoured of thy own vain Diſpoſition, I felt myſelf moved to addreſs thee a *ſecond* Time, in order to diſcloſe my Mind more fully unto thee, and, if poſſible, to open thine Eyes to the Light of Truth.

I ſaid, in my former Letter, that thy Brother *William* was convicted at our Aſſizes for committing a Rape on the Body of a Woman: But I have ſince been informed that I was in an Error in thus ſpeaking, and that he was only indicted

for *attempting* it, and convicted of a Misdemeanor, and was fined accordingly. I think it my Duty, in the first Place, to retract what I may have written contrary to the Truth, and wish thou wilt herein follow my example.

THOU knowest that the People of this Country value themselves on what they call the Liberty of the Press, by which they can lay their Sentiments before each other, and the Public, on all proper Occasions. This Liberty *THOMAS CHUBB* was an earnest Asserter and Supporter of; and this Liberty thou hast taken with respect to him and his Writings, and the same I have already taken, and now again do take with thee. I fear, indeed, thou wilt treat my Labours with Contempt, because I cannot use *Strangeness of Speech* towards thee, nor deal in poetic Numbers; and on this Account thou mayest rank me among thy *greasy Scriblers*; but as I only aim to write like an honest Man and a plain Christian, I know of no Service thy *Greek* and *Latin* can be of unto me in either of those Characters.------And now I proceed to take Notice of some other Things in thy Memoirs of *Thomas Chubb*, which thou wilt do well to review and seriously consider.

THOU sayest (p. 15---19.) that "He "published a Book entitled *The Supremacy* "*of the Father asserted*, in which, all the

" Arguments that CAN be brought from " SCRIPTURE, to undeify the Son of God, " are collected."——And though thou doſt not pretend to convict him of ſwerving from the written Word therein, yet thou ſayeſt, " There was NOTHING in " this whole Performance but what was " STALE and TRITE, and as ſuch had " been refuted again and again."——Well then, it ſeems there are *ſuch* Arguments to be found in the Bible, and *Thomas* made uſe of them in his Book; but is that a ſufficient Reaſon for thy ridiculing both him and them in the Manner thou haſt there done? Whatever thou mayeſt think, it ſounds very indecent and unmannerly, in a Teacher of the Bible, to call Arguments that are confeſſedly brought from thence, *ſtale* and *trite*. Yet, that *neither WHOREMONGERS, nor DRUNKARDS, nor REVILERS, &c. ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God*, is nevertheleſs true, for its being ſtale and trite: But 'tis no wonder that old Goſpel Truths don't ſuit the Taſte of ſuch new-faſhion'd Blades as thee.

THOU beareſt Witneſs that *THOMAS CHUBB* was a Man of Chriſtian Simplicity, both in Dreſs and Behaviour; for thou ſayeſt (p. 30.) " That which recommend-" ed his Writings, next to the Illiteracy, " was the Plainneſs and Simplicity of the " Author, the Gravity of his Countenance,

" and the Sobriety of his Demeanour." And therefore thou doſt liken him to one of the *faithful People*, p. 58. I am glad to find thee ſometimes acknowledging the Truth; and though thou doſt not intend hereby to praiſe him, yet as it comes from the Pen of his moſt inveterate Enemy, it cannot fail of being greatly regarded. But nothing can be more juſt than the very Reverſe hereof, when applied to thy ſelf, to wit, *That* which renders thy Writings *contemptible*, next to the *Pedantry*, is the *Buffoonry* of the Author, the *Levity* of his Countenance, and the *Wantonneſs* of his Demeanour.

AGAIN, thou ſayeſt that " When he " was at the Houſe of *Joſeph Jekyll*, he " was obliged to dreſs in a Manner to " which he was till then an utter Stran- " ger, *i. e.* with a Tye-wigg and a Sword; " but being conſcious to himſelf how ill " the Dreſs became the Man, how ridicu- " lous he appeared to ſome, and how deſ- " picable to others, he ſoon grew weary of " them and put them off." (p. 25.) This is good again, and well ſpoken, and I pray thee, Friend, *go thou and do likewiſe*. Imitate ſo worthy an Example, and thou ſhalt have Praiſe for the ſame; for, aſſure thy ſelf, *Thomas* did not loſe the Eſteem of his Friend *Joſeph* by acting ſo prudent a Part. But alas! I fear thou wilt never be endued with

with *Thomas*'s Modeſty and Wiſdom in this reſpect, for thou art of the Number of thoſe ſimple ones, who *paſs on and are puniſhed*. And let me tell thee, if thou waſt to put off all that which renders thee *ridiculous* to ſome, and *deſpicable* to others, thou wouldſt be a poor naked Bird indeed. However, lay aſide thy Vices and Follies, and then I conſent, that to defend thee from the Cold, thou keep thy Coat the enſuing Winter. Diveſt thy ſelf of that Bitterneſs and Wrath that abounds within thee, and learn the true Chriſtian Spirit; for *Paul* ſays, *The Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle to all Men* *. But if this Goſpel Precept ſounds *ſtale* and *trite* to thee, at leaſt, learn Humanity and Politeneſs, and don't talk of ſending thy fellow Creatures to the Devil, with his Saucer-Eyes and cloven Feet; of breaking open Tombs, butchering and burning of dead Bodies, and ſcattering their Aſhes in the Air: This is horrid and ſhocking.—And though thou mayeſt thus *rave* and *roar*, at thoſe unhappy Perſons, whoſe Crimes have brought them, in *Chains* and *Fetters*, to abide thy Madneſs; yet, when thou talkeſt thus to free and honeſt Men, they needs muſt greatly deſpiſe and contemn thee.

And now I will explain to thee a Thing at which thou ſeemeſt to marvel. Thou ſayeſt

* 2 *Tim.* ii. 24.

ſayeſt (p. 21.) " A Man who filled an ar-
" chiepiſcopal See," (by which hard Words, I ſuppoſe, thou meaneſt a Man of *John Tillotſon*'s Order, though in another Country,) " out of his great Zeal to the Chri-
" ſtian Cauſe, was not aſhamed to declare
" publickly, at a Meeting of his Brethren
" who were concerting Meaſures for pro-
" pagating the Goſpel in foreign Parts, that
" *he thought it not worth their while to*
" *trouble themſelves or the poor Creatures*
" *(the Pagans) about it; that they were*
" *much better, in his Opinion, as they*
" *were, and much happier in their native*
" *Ignorance.*" Truly, Friend, theſe Words are weighty and important, and it grieves me to my Heart that the Man had any Occaſion to utter them; but whoſo looketh into thy Writings will ſee abundant Reaſon to juſtify him herein: And thou haſt done well, in giving them a Place in thy Book, where no one can be at a Loſs to underſtand them. Don't, therefore, take up with a miſtaken Notion of the Man, as if he looked upon the Chriſtian Religion as an Enemy to the Peace and Happineſs of Mankind: He firmly believed the contrary, and uttered them only on viewing the dreadful Havock and Deſolation that ſuch furious Zealots as thee have occaſioned in the World. And verily, if thine be the Temper of the Goſpel, and the genuine Spirit

of

of Chriſtianity, then, I ſay, happy are thoſe Nations that are ignorant of it, and the People which knoweth it not! And happy would it have been for the Natives of *Mexico* and *Peru*, if *ſuch* Chriſtians as *thee* had never appeared amongſt them; for with a View to *ſuch*, and *ſuch only*, I am perſuaded the above Words were ſpoken.

Thou ſayeſt, (p. 28.) "It is Matter "of Grief and Wonder how the Cauſe of "Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, ſo much as it has, "from ſuch rude and unſkilful Hands," (meaning ſuch as *Thomas Chubb*.) Take Courage, Man; Chriſt's Cauſe can never greatly ſuffer by thoſe who are careful to imitate his Example, and govern themſelves by his Precepts, which, I believe, *Thomas* endeavoured to do. There is, indeed, a certain Cauſe carrying on in the World, which thou mayeſt call *Chriſt's*, but which *Thomas* called the *Prieſt's Cauſe*, and this he did moſt earneſtly oppoſe; and I believe it has ſuffered conſiderably by his Means, to the no ſmall Grief of its crafty Supporters.——Nay, I will farther own to thee, that in the Height of his Zeal againſt the *latter*, he ſometimes failed of paying a due Regard to the *former*, and therein I defend him not.

But I will now tell thee truly, by whoſe Means the Cauſe of Chriſt has ſuf-

fered

fered ſo much; namely, by thoſe of thine own *Order*, who profeſſing themſelves Believers in Chriſt, nay, his *Embaſſadors* to the World, are yet in their Hearts *unholy*, and in their Lives *profane*; who, like *thee*, never talk of Heaven, and the Things of the Spirit, but when they are mounted on what thou calleſt the *Roſtrum*; then, indeed, they affect, for a few Minutes, to become Advocates of Virtue and Piety, and even quarrel with the Pomps and Vanities of the World; but this *Part* (or *Farce* if thou hadſt rather) being *acted*, they readily mix with the Multitude, among whom they are only to be diſtinguiſhed by their *Babyloniſh* Garments, and a more eager Purſuit of thoſe very Pomps and Vanities they ſo lately exclaimed againſt. But can it be thought, that they really believe in their Hearts, what they take ſuch Care, by their Practice, to refute? Or, will Men be prevailed upon to ſeek the Joys of Heaven, by thoſe, whoſe only Joy ariſeth from having their Corn, and Wine, and Oil increaſe? Will they baulk their carnal Appetites and Deſires, at the Command of thoſe who are ſtudious in providing for the Fleſh, that they may fulfil the Luſts thereof? No: *Theſe* are the moſt dangerous *Unbelievers* and Corrupters of the Age, by means of whoſe bad Example, *the Hearts of the Sons of Men are fully ſet in them*

to

to do Evil: And believe me, Friend, if there were fewer *Infidels*, at leaſt in Practice, among thoſe that are called *Clergy*, their Number would ſoon decreaſe among the *Laity*. Yet theſe are the Men to whom thou wouldſt have the Unlearned and Ignorant, "modeſtly apply, to receive In-"ſtruction from their Mouths," (p. 63.) ----I have been thinking with myſelf, how thou wouldſt receive ſome honeſt Chriſtian Man, who labouring under a ſpiritual Malady, ſhould apply himſelf to thee as the Phyſician of his Soul. Wouldſt thou lay down thy Pipe, and reſt thy Bottle, a few Moments, whilſt he opened his Caſe unto thee? Wouldſt thou patiently hear his Complaints, compaſſionate his Sorrows, and endeavour to remove them, by pouring the *Balm of Gilead* into his Wounds? I trow not.---Thou wouldſt rather ſwell with Indignation at his *Freedom*, and in thy Wrath ſpurn him from thy Preſence, yea, perhaps, *damn* him for a *Fool* or a *Fanatick*. At leaſt, by reaſon of thy utter Ignorance of ſpiritual Things, thou wouldſt as (*Paul* ſays *) be unto him a Barbarian, and he would be a Barbarian unto thee.———O bleſſed *Jeſus!* are theſe the Men, who by thy Spirit thou haſt called, and commiſſioned to diſciple the Nations to thy Truth; to teach them to put on Bowels of Mer-

 cy,

* 1 *Cor.* xiv. 11.

cy, Meekneſs, Charity, and Heavenly-mindedneſs; and to proſelite them to a Religion, whoſe Characteriſtic is, *Peace on Earth, Good-will to Men?* No ſurely—— Theſe Men have *not entered by the Door into the Sheepfold, but have climbed up ſome other Way.*

I WOULD not be thought, by what I have now ſaid, to cenſure all of thine Order, as Men like thy ſelf, deſtitute of the Chriſtian Spirit. I know, and have heard of many amongſt them, whoſe Light ſhineth before the World, and who, by their good Works, do glorify their Father which is in Heaven; and ſuch as theſe I pray that God will bleſs, and make his Work to proſper in their Hands.

AND here I was going to put an End to my Letter, but happening to caſt mine Eyes on the *Ballad* which thou haſt affixed at the End of thy *Memoirs*, I was ſomewhat diverted (after my ſerious Employment) with the following Words:

"Go forth, ſays *JOVE*, to *SARUM's mitred Sire.*
"The *CHIEF obeys.*"——

----Ay, Friend, thou ſayeſt right----I always thought that *Mitres*, and *Copes*, and *Croſiers*, were never appointed by Jeſus Chriſt, nor worn by his Apoſtles; and I was ſomewhat at a Loſs to know from whence they

had their Original; but now I find it was from the God on Mount *Olympus*, and pity it is that any but his Prieſts had ever made uſe of them.——But how cameſt thou to repreſent *Sarum's SIRE* ſo obſequious to *Jupiter*'s Order?——"The Chief obeys."——Doſt thou think to make thy Court to him in ſo heatheniſh a Manner as this? For though he may have on him ſome of the Habiliments of *Jove*'s Prieſts, yet, I verily believe, he deſpiſes alike thy Heathen Gods and thee. As for thy ſelf, I think thou canſt not bear a more ſuitable Title than that of *a Prieſt of Jove*; and if thou art for a *Trinity* here, join *Bacchus* and *Venus* to *Jove*, and thou mayeſt then worſhip them all, or which of them thou pleaſeſt.

And now I once more bid thee heartily farewell, and am

Thy Friend,

J---- L---le.

SALISBURY, the 27th Day of the 8th Month, called *October*.

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THE

PREFACE.

AS the following ſheets contain reflections which are the produce of many years enquiry: ſo, I hope, my reader will not be ſurprized, or make it a matter of complaint, if he ſhould find me in one part to differ from myſelf in another; but would rather think it ſtrange, if I ſhould not, ſeeing it is what men of free enquiry are always liable to; becauſe thoſe evidences, which are the ground of their perſuaſions, are, by ſuch enquiry, liable to be differently perceived by them. A proper and well-grounded aſſent to the truth of any propoſition, is founded on a perception of the evidence, upon which the truth of that propoſition is ſuppoſed to depend: and, therefore, as our perception of ſuch evidence is, in many caſes, liable to alter and change; that is; what we perceive to

be concluſive to day may appear otherwiſe to morrow; ſo our opinions are liable to alter and change likewiſe. And as I have, in the courſe of my enquiries, had a ſtrict regard to truth, and this has led me ſometimes to differ from myſelf, by a change of my opinions: ſo I am ready to retract and give up my opinion I have embraced or maintained, when ſuch farther evidence ſhall appear, as renders it juſt and proper ſo to do.

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THE

SUPREMACY

OF THE

FATHER

ASSERTED:

OR,

Eight arguments from ſcripture to prove, that the Son is a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

First printed in the Year 1715.

TO THE

Reverend the CLERGY,

And in Particular to the Right Reverend

GILBERT Lord Biſhop of

SARUM,

Our vigilant and laborious Dioceſan.

My LORD,

BEFORE I preſume to offer and commend to the *Clergy*, and in particular to your *lordſhip*'s conſideration and protection, the annexed papers, I beg leave to obſerve a few things, in order to *obviate* what may be urged againſt me upon the account of this work, *viz. firſt*, my *inability* in *general* for ſuch a performance; and in particular my not being read in the *original languages*. To the *firſt* part, *viz.* my inability in general, I anſwer, that I have done my beſt. And as there are degrees of uſefulneſs, if this mean performance becomes uſeful in the leaſt degrees (which I hope it will) towards the bringing home the *baniſh'd truths* of chriſtianity; this, I think, will be ſufficient apology for me, and a ſufficient anſwer to the objection.

To the latter part of the objection, *viz.* my not being read in the original languages; I anſwer, *firſt*; what I have done in this affair, was not original intended for publick view, much leſs to engage in a controverſy with the learn-

learned world, a work which I am unqualified for, and therefore would not meddle with. all that I attended, being only to lay before my neighbours, who are otherwiſe minded, the *grounds* and *reaſons* of my diſſent from them, and to anſwer their objections, in order to prevent their *uncharitable* and thereby unchriſtian cenſures and reproaches; and (if it might be) to bring them over to what *appears* to me to be the truth. But when theſe papers had been view'd by ſome friends, it was judged they might be of more publick uſe; and ſo requeſted that they might be printed. Wherefore, in ſubmiſſion both to the judgment and requeſt of thoſe friends, I have given way to their being offered to more publick conſideration. But, *ſecondly*, I anſwer, what I have attempted in this work, is to vindicate and reſtore the *firſt* great article of primitive chriſtian faith, *viz.* that there is *but one ſupreme God*; and that the *God* and *Father* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and *he only*, excluſive of all other beings, ſubſiſtances, perſon, and perſons whatſoever, is this one ſupreme God. This is a controverſy which may be reduced into a very narrow compaſs, *viz.* the anſwering directly yes, or no, to this plain queſtion: *Is the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, really and truly the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt?* Here, if the anſwer be in the negative, then ,he expreſs teſtimony of *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* is denyed: if in the *affirmitive*, then what I am pleading for is yielded up, *viz.* the ſupremacy of the Father. This, and this only, is what I have principally deſign'd to make good; and therefore whatever elſe I may have happened to touch upon, is only occaſionally, and as it has a relation to this important Point. And this being a thing ſo level to the human underſtanding, and in which the ſcriptures are ſo full and plain, the criticiſing upon an ori-

ginal word, would not make for or againſt me in the preſent caſe; and Conſequently there was no great need of being read in the original languages in order to this performance. But farther,

It may, *ſecondly*, be objected, that I am not of the clergy, but only a *laymember* of the chriſtian church; to which I anſwer, *firſt*, that it is the duty of every chriſtian, as well the *laity*, as the clergy, to *examine* the rule, the grounds, and reaſons of their faith; and if they diſſent from others, to *publiſh* the grounds and reaſons of that diſſent, in order to be reſtored to the truth themſelves, if they be in error; or if they be in the right to reſtore thoſe to the truth who are in the wrong. This, I ſay, is not only the right, but the duty of every private chriſtian, as far as it properly, and decently, comes within the compaſs of his power; becauſe every private chriſtian owes ſo much to himſelf, to the truth, and to that chriſtian ſociety to which he ſtands related. And this being all that I have done, I think my being only a lay-member of the chriſtian church, is no juſt exception to this performance. But,

Secondly, I anſwer, that the practice of the church, of *Rome*, in obliging her lay-members to ſubmit themſelves blindly to the judgment of the church, without examining the rule, the grounds, and reaſons of that faith, has been juſtly eſteem'd a *groſs corruption* by the reformed churches; and that they have dealt very hardly by the laity in this, as well as in other reſpects. But, alas, if the laity of the reformed churches, are alike obliged to ſubmit their judgments to the judgment of the church, and to beleive and receive things, as the church beleives and receives the ſame, without having the liberty to examine the rule, the grounds, and reaſons of their faith,

and

and if the caſe require it, to diſſent, and to publiſh the grounds of that diſſent, then the reformed churches, in this reſpect, are *relapſed* and gone back to that anti-chriſtianiſm, which they once were brought out of. And likewiſe the laity of the reformed churches, are in a much *worſe caſe* than the laity of the church of *Rome*. For tho' their *chriſtian liberty* is alike *invaded*, and tho' the yoke is the ſame, which is put upon the neck of either; yet the church of *Rome*, has taken care to make it ſit eaſy upon her members, whilſt the reformed churches have left this yoke to gall the necks of their people, even unto bitterneſs. For,

Firſt, the church of *Rome*, has taught her people to beleive, that *infallibility* is lodged in and with their church; and conſequently all who are ſatisfied of the truth of this point, can comfortably ſubmit their judgments to the judgment of the church, without examining the rule or grounds of their faith, becauſe the church is infalliable, and therefore cannot err. Whereas on the other ſide, the reformed churches have made no ſuch proviſion, but on the contrary have declared that churches *may err*, and *have erred*; and if ſo, what a *galling yoak* muſt it be upon our neck to be obliged to ſubmit (not blindly but with our *eyes open*), our judgments to the judgment of a *fallible* church, in thoſe things wherein it plainly appears to us, that the church has departed from the truth? Again,

Secondly, the church of *Rome* has forbid her lay-members the *uſe* of the ſcriptures, and in ſo doing has rendered their ſubmiſſion to the judgment of the church more eaſy, by taking that from them, which if they had the uſe of, would unavoidably lead them into temptation. That is, they would by a free uſe of the ſcriptures, be tempted to diſſent in their judgments from the

judgments of the church. Whereas on the other ſide, the reformed churches have made no ſuch proviſion to keep their people out of the way of temptation; but on the contrary have put the *ſcriptures* into the vulgar tongue, and into the hands of their people, and charged it upon them as their duty to *hear*, *read*, and *meditate* upon them. Now

This makes the yoak ſtill more heavy, by laying ſuch a *temptation* in our way. For when we read and conſider ſuch a text as this, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 11. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for* why *will ye die, O houſe of* Iſrael. How hard and galling muſt it be for a conſidering chriſtian, to be obliged to beleive and aſſert, that God has from eternity predeſtinated to damnation the greateſt part of mankind; and that he created them for no other end, but to glorify and diſplay his abſolute power and ſovereignty in their deſtruction. I ſay, how hard muſt it be for a chriſtian, when he reads and conſiders the aforeſaid text, to be obliged to beleive and aſſert this, if the church, he is a member of, is ſo unhappy as to beleive and aſſert the ſame; and how great a temptation muſt a perſon be under to beleive and aſſert otherwiſe. From all which it appears, that if the laity of the reformed churches are not at liberty to examine the rule, the grounds, and reaſons of their faith, and likewiſe at liberty to diſſent from the judgment of the church, in thoſe things wherein it plainly appears to them that the church has departed from the truth, and to publiſh the grounds and reaſons of that diſſent, then we (*viz.* proteſtants) are in a much worſe caſe, than the laity of the church of *Rome*; and we are put under a yoak, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.

From

From the whole it appears, that in this performance I have not gone over the *bounds* of my *chriſtian calling*; but have only been in the *practice* of my *duty*, and in the exerciſe of my *chriſtian liberty*: a liberty in which I think every proteſtant aught to ſtand faſt, in oppoſition to the enchroachments of popiſh anti-chriſtianiſm, which the proteſtant churches may be in danger of relapſing into. And

Thus much I have thought proper to obſerve, that ſo I might prepare a way to propoſe to the clergy, and in particular to your lordſhip's conſideration and protection, the following lines, by removing thoſe objections, which otherwiſe might have been an impediment to it.

It is a thing too well known for the clergy, or your lordſhip in particular, to be ignorant of, that the *firſt* great article of primitive chriſtian faith, has been the ſubject of chriſtian controverſy, almoſt ever ſince chriſtianity has had a being, and that it has ben particularly diſputed about in this age; many tongues and pens having been employed, both in preaching, writing, and conference, upon this ſubject. I therefore having, out of my leſs ability or ſcarcity, caſt my mite into this common treaſury: into which others, out of their larger abilities or abundance, have caſt in by handfuls, and now being to offer it to publick view, the occaſion and end of which I have already obſerved, I do with due humility and deference beg leave to offer and preſent it to the conſideration, and as far as it hath *ſtrength* of argument, and *truth* on its ſide, to the protection of the clergy, and in particular to your lordſhip. And,

As in the trial of all other cauſes, the ſupe our ſtrength of evidencies, which conſiſts in thei *number*, *clearneſs*, and *credit*, is that which in juſtice

ena-

entitles either ſide of the queſtion to the verdict; ſo I deſire that Juſtice may take place in the preſent caſe. The evidence which I have produced, are arguments from ſcripture to prove, that the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. is a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to his God and Father; and that the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is only and alone the ſupreme God. Theſe evidences are in number *eight*; for clearneſs (not circumſtantial dark, and doubtful, but) *poſitive*, *full*, *expreſs*, and *plain*; and for credit, the *infalliable word of God*. If a ſuperiour, or at leaſt an equal ſtrength of evidence, cannot be produc'd on the other ſide, then I think my ſide of the queſtion, is by the laws of common equity, entitled to the verdict. May every one, who ſhall think fit to examine this matter, have grace to do it with ſincerity and impartiallity, as in juſtice they ought to do, that ſo they may well and truly try this cauſe, and give their Judgment according to the evidence and ſo help our God.

Perhaps it may be looked upon, by ſome, as an inſtance of intolerable *preſumption* and *impudence* in me, to offer and preſent this performance to the conſideration and protection of ſo learned and venerable a body. But ſurely this will be eaſily apologized for, by every gracious mind. Becauſe as it is the duty and buſineſs of the clergy to uſe their beſt endeavours, towards the reſtoring chriſtianity to its original native purity and ſimpliſity; ſo it is alike their duty to encourage and protect all proper endeavours, uſed by others, towards the attaining that end. And therefore, it muſt be a very unjuſt reflection, when ſuch encouragement and protection is called for from them, to charge it with intolerable preſumption and impudence. Truth ſurely has an undoubted *right* to the clergy's protection, and therefore moſt certainly

tainly the clergy of all other chriſtians may be called upon, without either preſumption or impudence, to give it ſhelter.

May it pleaſe God to pour out abundantly of his ſpirit and grace, upon all that are, or ſhall be conſecrated to him, in the ſacred miniſtry of his church, and particularly upon your lordſhip; that all of you may fill up the place and relation you are each one called to in the church of God. That you may become beautiful upon the mountains, bringing the glad tidings of peace and ſalvation; and may it pleaſe him to bring into being the happy day, when mercy and truth ſhall meet together; when righteouſneſs and peace ſhall kiſs each other; when they ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all God's holy mountain; when the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be lifted up above the top of all the hills; when the knowledge of the Lord ſhall fill the earth, as the waters cover the ſea; when the Lord ſhall rule and reign in *Zion*, and unto the ends of the earth; and when it ſhall be written, even upon the bells of the horſes, holineſs to the Lord. And may it pleaſe the good Lord God to haſten it in his time. I conclude with begging the clergy's and in particular your lordſhip's bleſſing; and remain,

Your Lordſhip's dutiful,

And affectionate Servant,

THO. CHUBB.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE *Following* DISCOURSE,

Which was not in the two firſt EDITIONS.

AS the deſign of the following arguments is to prove, or make good this propoſition, *viz. That the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is a Being inferiour, and Subordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God*; ſo I have thought proper, by way of introduction, to ſtate the notion, and ſhew in what ſence I underſtand the ſeveral terms, of which the foregoing propoſition is compoſed. And this I am inclined to do upon *three* accounts. *Firſt*, Becauſe if I ſhould be in *error*, ſuch error would be the better *diſcovered*, and the more eaſily *detected*. For when we deliver our minds upon any ſubject, in a way which makes it doubtful to others, what we really intend by it, this is offering an *injury* to ourſelves; becauſe others become unqualified to offer what is proper for our conviction. Again, *ſecondly*, I am inclined to it upon the account of my reader, that he might not be *perplexed* or *miſled*, by any thing which I might lay before him. Beſides, this procedure is perfectly *fair* and *equitable* in it ſelf; and that is a *third* reaſon for my acting in this way. To uſe words in a *doubtful* ſence, that ſo when we are preſſed in an argument, we may fly for ſanctuary to what ſence we pleaſe, and thereby *guard* againſt the force of

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an anſwer: this is not arguing but ſhuffling, and playing tricks with mankind; which practice I am ſure I have always deſpiſed. And

Tho, from hence it may be urged, that the former editions were *deficient* in this particular, for aſmuch as I did not therein ſtate the notion, of the ſeveral terms made uſe of in the propoſition here referred to; yet that does not *weaken* the *evidence* I have produced, to prove or make good that propoſition. For as I undeſtood the terms I made uſe of, in their plain and obvious ſence ſo in that ſence, I think I proved what I undertook to maintain, Beyond all poſſible contradiction. And, therefore, the reaſon why I enter into a particular explication of thoſe terms now, is not any real ambiguity in the ſubject, or in my manner of handling it; but becauſe of the *ſubtile diſtinctions* and *evaſions* which men fly to, that ſo they may avoid the force of the argument which lies againſt them: and theſe render ſuch an explication proper, which otherwiſe there would not be occaſion for. However, if there was ſuch a defect in the former editions, that is what cannot be recalled, and it is well if it can be ſupplied, which I here propoſe to do, by giving a particular explication of the ſeveral Terms made uſe of, and by ſhewing, in the Courſe of the following arguments, wherein their force and ſtrength conſiſt, conſonant to that explication; and in ſo doing, I hope I ſhall ſupply every defect, which the two firſt edition of this tract may be chargeable with. But to proceed,

By the following character, *viz.* [the Son of God our Lord Jeſus Chriſt] I intend to expreſs that *moral agent*, to whom this character is applied in the *New Teſtament*; the hiſtory of whoſe *life* and *miniſtry* is contained in the four Goſpels. Him

I mean, of whom it is recorded, that he was born of the Virgin *Mary*, in the town of *Bethlehem*; that he was brought up in *Galilee*; that he was baptized of *John* in *Jordon*; that he preached the doctrine of repentance to the *Jews*; and wrought a multitude of miracles, to confirm the truth of his miſſion; that he was crucified, died, and was buried; that he roſe again from the dead, on the third day, *&c.* and who declared himſelf to be the Son of God, that God was his Father; and of whom God declared that he was his beloved Son. I ſay, it is this moral agent, and him only, to whom I do apply this Character, *viz. the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and conſequently, that neceſſarily exiſting Being, of whom the ſcripture declares, that he is the Father of this Son of God; him, this Father, this neceſſarily exiſting Being, I do abſolutely exclude out of the idea of the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as aforeſaid.

I have purpoſely avoided uſing the term perſon; for as this term, when uſed in the preſent controverſy, is very *ambiguous*, it being ſometimes uſed *properly*, and ſometimes *otherwiſe*, as it beſt ſerves the writer's purpoſe; ſo men of craft and ſubtilty, hereby make an advantage of the weakneſs of their fellow creatures, and perplex, and miſlead them. Thus when the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are to be *proved three perſons*, then it is urged, that perſonal properties are aſcribed to each of theſe ſingly in the *New Teſtament*. And here the term perſon is uſed in a *proper ſence*; that is, in ſuch a ſence as common uſage has fixed to it, becauſe ſuch properties are urged as proof in the preſent caſe, as are only applicable to a perſon, when the term perſon is uſed in a proper ſenſe, as aforeſaid. But when it becomes neceſſary to ward off the

charge of *tritheiſm*, or a *plurality of deities*, then the Term perſon is uſed, not properly but *figuratively*, or rather in no ſence at all, it being highly probable, that many who make uſe of the term fix *no idea* to it. Therefore, to avoid this inconvenience, I have avoided uſing the term perſon and have uſed the terms *moral agent*, as being expreſſive of the idea, which I affix to thoſe other terms, *viz.* the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as aforeſaid. Again,

The Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is [a Being] by which I intend to expreſs a moral agent, as a being, or agent is diſtinguiſhed from, and ſtands oppoſed; *firſt*, to a *property*, or the *manner of exiſting* of a being or agent; and *ſecondly*, as it ſtands oppoſed to a *coalation* or *ſociety* of beings or agents, whoſe complex idea may be expreſſed by one and the ſame character, as an *army*, or a *parliament*, or the like. And,

Firſt, I have uſed the term [a Being] in diſtinction from, and in oppoſition to a *property*, or the *manner* of *exiſting* of a being or agent. Properties and modes of exiſting, neceſſarily ſuppoſe a being or agent, to whom they are related. If there were no being, there could be no property, or manner of exiſting, becauſe there is no ſuch thing in nature as modes or properties abſtracted from being, There is no ſuch thing as knowledge or power, but as theſe are the properties of, or as they conſtitute that being or agent, whoſe properties they may be truly ſaid to be. Modes or properties, when conſider'd as above, are meer empty abſtract notions; and therefore to talk of theſe, is to talk of ſhadows, and not of things: ſo that when I ſay, the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is [a Being] my meaning is, that he is not a *bare property* or manner of exiſting, but a *real moral agent*, as aforeſaid. Again,

Secondly,

Secondly, By [a Being] I intend to expreſs *only one* moral agent, in oppoſition to a *coalition* or *ſociety* of agents, whoſe complex idea may be expreſſed by one and the ſame character, as a parliament, an army, or the like. And conſequently I do not only exclude that neceſſarily exiſting Being, who is the Father of God's Son, out of the idea of the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but alſo every other moral agent whatever. And, indeed, if the character above mentioned, was uſed to expreſs the complex idea of a coalition or ſociety of agents, this would be ſuch a perverſion and abuſe of words, as would render all language uſeleſs. For if ſuch a practice were indulged. then we ſhould be perpetually at a loſs to know what ideas to fix to each others words. Again,

The Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is a Being [inferior] by which term I intend to expreſs, a *diſparity* betwixt the agent to whom it is applied, and another agent in that *particular*, wherein the compariſon is made between them, and that the other, in that particular, is his *ſuperiour*. Thus, one man is *inferiour* to another in *age*, in *ſtature*, in *ſtrength*, in *knowledge*, in *beauty*, in *riches*, and the like; when upon the *compariſon* it appears, that he has a *leſs degree* of age, ſtature, ſtrength, *&c.* than that other man has, with whom he ſtands compared in theſe reſpects, and conſequently, that other, in thoſe reſpects: is his *ſuperiour*. And tho' one man may be ſuperiour to another in one reſpect, and yet be inferiour to that other in another reſpect, as when one man has *more* ſtrength, and yet is *leſs* in ſtature than another: yet this is not the caſe of the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that other moral agent, with whom, in the above propoſition, he

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ſtands compared. So that by being inferior, I intend to expreſs his inferiority in all natural perfections, to that neceſſarily exiſting Being, who is his Father. Again,

The Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is a Being inferiour and [ſubordinate.] by which term I intend to expreſs an agent inveſted with *authority* to rule and govern, which authority does not ariſe from any natural relation he ſtands in to thoſe he has authority over; but is *committed* to him as a truſt, by the will and pleaſure of another, Authority is of two kinds, *viz. natural* and *derived.*

By natural authority, I mean, that which ariſes from the nature of things, and which an agent is inveſted with from that *natural relation* he ſtands in to thoſe he has authority over. Thus, *parents* have an authority over their children whilſt thoſe children are in a ſtate of nonage, and are not capable of judging of the fitneſs of their own actions: and this authority parents are inveſted with, from that natural relation they ſtand in to their children, as they voluntarily became the inſtruments of bringing them into being, and therefore they ought in reaſon to take care of, and to direct and govern thoſe children, until ſuch time as they are capable of taking care of themſelves, and of directing their own actions. And thus the *God* and *Father* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, has naturally an authority over all his creatures; and this authority he is inveſted with, from that natural relation he ſtands into them, as he voluntarily called them into being, and thereby became their common parent, and the narural guardian of their happineſs.

By derived authority, I mean not ſuch as an agent is naturally inveſted with, as aforeſaid; but only ſuch authority as is *committed* to hin in truſt,

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by the will and pleaſure of another. Thus *guardians* and *maſters* have authority over thoſe children who are committed to their care; but then this authority is not natural but derived, it is lodged in them as a truſt, by thoſe who are naturally inveſted with authority, as aforeſaid. And,

As authority is thus diſtinguiſhed into natural and derived; ſo the agents or governours who exerciſe it, are diſtinguiſhed by different characters upon that account, *viz. ſupreme* and *ſubordinate*. Supreme governours are ſuch as are naturally inveſted with authority, and who have conſtituted others to exerciſe that authority, either in whole or in part under them, and in their place and ſtead: and theſe are called ſupreme in diſtinction from, and in oppoſition to all thoſe who exerciſe a delegated authority, under them. *Subordinate* governours are all ſuch as exerciſe a delegated authority, as aforeſaid; and they are called ſubordinate in diſtinction from, and in oppoſition to thoſe who are the fountains of authority to them. So that when I ſay, the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is a Being inferiour, and [ſubordinate.] I intend to expreſs, that the *authority* which he is inveſted with, is not *natural* but *derived*. That is, he is not inveſted with it from any natural relation he ſtands in to us; but it is committed to him as a truſt, by him, who is the common parent of us all: and therefore he, *viz.* the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is, in point of authority, *ſubordinate* to that fountain of authority *viz.* his God and Father from whom he derived it. Again,

By the [Father] I intend to expreſs that moral agent, or that neceſſarily exiſting Being, whom in common language we characterize by the term *God*; the ſame with him who derived his being from none, and who gave being to all things.

And

And he is called the *Father*, in contradiſtinction to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom he has declared that he is his *beloved Son.* Again

When I ſay that the Father is the ſupreme God, by the term *God*, I intend to expreſs both *exiſtence*, *agency*, and *authority*; which is the ſame as if I ſhould ſay, that the Father is the firſt and chief Being, and agent; and that he is the firſt and chief governour, he is the fountain both of being, agency, and authority. Laſtly,

By the term [alone] I intend to exclude the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and every other moral agent, out of the *idea* of the *ſupreme God*, as explained above; excepting only, that neceſſarily exiſting Being, who is the Father of God's Son. To him, and to him alone, I do apply the character of ſupreme God.

So that the whole propoſition may be delineated thus; the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is not a mode, property, or the manner of exiſting of a being, neither a coilition or ſociety of agents, but a Being, that is, one individual moral agent. And this agent is in point of exiſtence, agency, and all natural perfections below or inferior; and in point of authority ſubordinate to that neceſſarily exiſting Being who is his Father. And that the Father alone, excluſive of the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and of every other moral agent, is the firſt and chief Being and agent, and the firſt and chief governour; he alone is the fountain both of being, agency, and authority.

EIGHT ARGUMENTS FROM SCRIPTURE TO PROVE,

That the Son is a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

ARGUMENT I.

First, The Son received his being and exiſtence from the Father, as the firſt ſupreme free cauſe of that being and exiſtence: conſequently, he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, as every effect is inferiour to its firſt ſupreme free cauſe.

THAT the Father is the *cauſe* of the Son's being, ſee *John* iii. 16. *For God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son,* &c. If the relation of a father to a ſon, doth not imply the ſon's receiving his being from that father; yet certainly the father's begetting of the ſon, can imply no leſs. For whatever difference there may be betwixt begetting, creating, and making of a thing; yet they are all the ſame in this, *viz.* that the thing which is begotten, created, or made, is by that operation really produced: and if ſo, then it follows, that the Son received his being and exiſtence from the Father. That the Father is the *firſt ſupreme* cauſe of the Son's being, is here taken for granted; for if there be a firſt ſupreme cauſe, antecedent to the Father,

Father, then that first cause would justly claim thecharacter of supreme God. And,

As the Father is the first supreme cause of the Son's being, so he is likewise the *free cause* of that his being and existence. That is, the Father did not beget the Son by a necessity of nature, but from the freedom of his will. And this is evident from the nature of the thing. For every thing that acts from a necessity of nature, must surely always act the same, because always under the same necessity; or rather it would be one continued act through all eternity, when the being that acts is an eternal being, as the being here referred to is supposed to be. But it is manifest, that this is not the present case. Because when the scriptures make mention of the begetting or generation of the Son, it is an action which is *past*; consequently, it was an act of the Father's will. For if the father begets the Son by a necessity of nature, then the Son is always begetting, but never is nor will be begotten. The word *beget* implies the act or operation of of the Father: the word *begotten*, implies the perfecting and finishing of that act, or of the thing which that act or operation produced, and consequently the ceasing or discontinuance of that act. Seeing then the scripture speaks of the Son, as a Being, which is already begotten, it will follow, that the Father's act in generating the Son, is past, and that the Son was begotten, not by necessity of nature, but from the freedom of the Father's will. So that, if there was such a thing as time, either before or after the generation of the Son, then his existence sprang not from a necessity of nature, but from a freedom of will. But time has taken place since the Son's generation, he having had a real personal existence long since, and consequently, he owes his being to the Father's will and pleasure. Again,

John v. 26, *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself.* In this text there are three things asserted, *viz. first*, that the Father hath life in himself; *secondly*, that the life of the Son is from the Father; *thirdly*, that the life of the Son is the Father's gift. Now every gift is free and voluntary, and procedes not from a necessity of nature, but from the will of the donor. And, whether we consider the term *life*, as expressive of that *intelligence* and *activity* which constitutes *life* in, and to every moral agent, or as a power to *convey* that life to others, it alters not the case, because either of them excludes necessary existence from the Son; it being equally absurd, and an impossibility in nature, for the necessarily existing Being, either to *receive* life and being from another, or a power to give life and being to others; such life and such power being necessarily *inherent* in the necessarily existing Being. Again,

Col. i. 19, *It pleased the Father, that in him* (*viz.* the Son) *should all fulness dwell.* By all fulness I think the Apostle must be understood to mean, a fulness of natural perfections, such as power, knowledge, *&c.* and a fulness of authority or dominion to be exercised in, and for the good of the Church. This I think, is evident from the Apostle's discourse, and this fulness in the Son, he declares to arise from the good pleasure of the Father. So that tho the Son is possessed of a fulness of natural perfections, and in him are lodged all the treasures of power, wisdom, and knowledge, yet it is manifest from the Scriptures, that these are not in the Son, independent of the Father, but are owing to his good pleasure. And,

Tho there is a fulness of authority in the Son; yet it is manifest, that it is not natural, but *derived.* For as the God and Father of our Lord Je-

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sus Christ, is the God and Father of us all, and as our Lord Jesus Christ is in point of *natural relation*, not our Father but our brother, as having been partaker of the same flesh and blood with us, liable to the same temptations, and exposed to the same sufferings, and for that reason he was not ashamed to call us *brethren*, Heb. ii. 11. 17. so from hence it will follow, that he cannot have a natural right of dominion over us; and that the authority he is invested with, must be committed to him in trust, by him who is the common parent of us all. And accordingly our Lord Jesus Christ declared, *That all power or authority was given him, both in heaven and in earth. And that all judgment was committed to him by the Father*, as in *Matt.* xxviii. 18, and *John* v. 22.

The force of the present argument arises from hence, *viz.* if our Lord Jesus Christ be indeed and in truth the *real* and *very Son*, and the *begotten Son of God*, and if the fulness of dominion, and of natural perfections, which take place in him, are the *gift*, and are owing to the *good pleasure* of the Father, as it is manifestly declared in the texts above, then it will unavoidably follow, that our Lord Jesus Christ is, in the strictest sence, *inferior*, in point of existence, agency, and all natural perfections, and *subordinate* in point of authority to his Father. For as the Son derived his being, his agency, his natural perfections, and his authority from the Father, so with respect to these he is dependent upon and controulable by the power and will of the Father. It being, I think, a self-evident proposition, that whatever the Father has a power to give, and which gift depends upon his good pleasure, he has power and is at liberty either to continue, or discontinue, to restrain, or controul, as he pleases.

John v. 26, *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself.* In this text there are three things asserted, *viz. first*, that the Father hath life in himself; *secondly*, that the life of the Son is from the Father; *thirdly*, that the life of the Son is the Father's gift. Now every gift is free and voluntary, and procedes not from a necessity of nature, but from the will of the donor. And, whether we consider the term *life*, as expressive of that *intelligence* and *activity* which constitutes *life* in, and to every moral agent, or as a power to *convey* that life to others, it alters not the case, because either of them excludes necessary existence from the Son; it being equally absurd, and an impossibility in nature, for the necessarily existing Being, either to *receive* life and being from another, or a power to give life and being to others; such life and such power being necessarily *inherent* in the necessarily existing Being. Again,

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Tho there is a fulness of authority in the Son; yet it is manifest, that it is not natural, but *derived.* For as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

sus Christ, is the God and Father of us all, and as our Lord Jesus Christ is in point of *natural relation*, not our Father but our brother, as having been partaker of the same flesh and blood with us, liable to the same temptations, and exposed to the same sufferings, and for that reason he was not ashamed to call us *brethren*, Heb. ii. 11. 17. so from hence it will follow, that he cannot have a natural right of dominion over us; and that the authority he is invested with, must be committed to him in trust, by him who is the common parent of us all. And accordingly our Lord Jesus Christ declared, *That all power or authority was given him, both in heaven and in earth. And that all judgment was committed to him by the Father*, as in *Matt.* xxviii. 18, and *John* v. 22.

The force of the present argument arises from hence, *viz.* if our Lord Jesus Christ be indeed and in truth the *real* and *very Son*, and the *begotten Son of God*, and if the fulness of dominion, and of natural perfections, which take place in him, are the *gift*, and are owing to the *good pleasure* of the Father, as it is manifestly declared in the texts above, then it will unavoidably follow, that our Lord Jesus Christ is, in the strictest sence, *inferior*, in point of existence, agency, and all natural perfections, and *subordinate* in point of authority to his Father. For as the Son derived his being, his agency, his natural perfections, and his authority from the Father, so with respect to these he is dependent upon and controulable by the power and will of the Father. It being, I think, a self-evident proposition, that whatever the Father has a power to give, and which gift depends upon his good pleasure, he has power and is at liberty either to continue, or discontinue, to restrain, or controul, as he pleases.

ARGUMENT II.

Secondly, The Son received gifts and bleſſings from the Father, and conſequently is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, according to St. Paul's *way of arguing in* Abraham's *and* Melchiſedeck's *caſe.* Heb. vii. 7. *Without all contradiction, the leſs is bleſſed of the better.*

THAT the Father hath beſtowed his gifts and bleſſings on the Son, ſee *Pſalm* ii. 8. *Aſk of me, and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.* Pſalm xiv. 6. 7. Heb. i. 8. 9. *But unto the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a ſcepter of righteouſneſs is the ſcepter of thy kingdom; thou haſt loved righteouſneſs and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.* What this anointing is, and who are here ſaid to be Chriſt's fellows, is needleſs to enquire after; it being ſufficient to my preſent purpoſe to obſerve, that he who received this anointing, is here characterized by the term God. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* This, I think, is one of the higheſt titles that ſcriptures give to the Son of God: and yet to this Being (great and high as he is) the Father is pleaſed to give his bleſſing, and to anoint him with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows. *John* iii. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand,* Phil. ii. 9. 10. 11. *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhall bow, and every tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* In the proceeding verſes St. *Paul* recommended to the *Phillipians*, an humble condeſcending temper of mind, from the example of Chriſt

Chriſt; *Let the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus*; and then he ſhewed what that condeſcention was, which Chriſt had exerciſed, *namely*, in that he, who was in the *form of God*, condeſcended to take upon him the *form of a ſervant*, and became *obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs*. And then the Apoſtle enforceth his exhortation to an humble condeſcention, from the advantage which attends ſuch a conduct; by ſhewing, how the Father had exalted the Son, as a reward for his abaſement, in the words I firſt cited. *Wherefore God* (even the Father) *hath highly exalted him*, (even the Son, that Son who was in the form of God antecedent to his abaſement) *and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhall bow*, &c. Matt. xxvii. 18. *All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth*. By all power is not meant *almightineſs*, but all *authority*; as is evident from the exerciſe of that power in Chriſt's commanding his diſciples, as in the words following: *Go yea therefore and teach all nation*, &c. which is as if he had ſaid, as I have received all authority from my Father, ſo, by vertue of that authority, I require you to go teach all nations, *&c.*

The force and ſtrength of this argument ariſes from hence, *viz.* if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did in reality *receive* gifts and bleſſings, and in particular power and anthority from the Father, as is moſt expreſsly declared in the abovecited texts, then he muſt of neceſſity be *inferior* and *ſubordinate* to the Father. For as the being in a capacity of receiving gifts and bleſſing from, and of exerciſing authority under another, is an evident proof of dependency and controulableneſs in ſuch a being; ſo from hence it will follow, by a neceſſary conſequence that as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did really receive gifts and bleſſings, and in particular power

or

or authority from his Father, he is in point of exiſtence, agency, and all natural perfections below or inferiour, and in point of authority ſubordinate to his Father.

For tho men may mutually give to, and receive favours from each other, and ſo in many caſes nothing can be concluded from thence, with regard to their ſuperiority or inferiority to each other; yet the caſe is otherwiſe with reſpect to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt and his Father, with whom (in the propoſition I am now maintaining) he ſtand compared. With them there is not a mutual communication of favours, nor giving one good thing for another; but one is the ſole giver, and the other is only a receiver. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand*; but the Son does not give any thing to the Father; there not being one word which ſounds like it in all the *Bible*, neither is it poſſible in itſelf. And all the return which the Son either did, or could make, was only an humble ſubmiſſion to his Father's will, and a thankful acknowledgment of his benefits. The Son likewiſe receives from the Father, *all power or authority in heaven and in earth*; but the Father does not, neither can he receive any thing from the Son. And this I urge as a farther *proof*, that the Son is inferior and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

ARGUMENT III.

Thirdly, the Father is ſaid to be the God of the Son, therefore the Son is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

THAT the Father is the God of the Son, *ſee Pſalm* xiv. 7. Heb. i. 9. *Wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.* Matt. xxvii. 46. *My God, my God, why has thou forſaken me.* John xx. 17. *But go to my brethren and ſay unto them, I aſcend to my Father, and your Father, and unto my God, and your God.* 2 Cor. xi 31. *The God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is bleſſed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.* In theſe texts it is expreſsly declared, that the Father is not only the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but alſo that he is *God.* And from hence I argue, that if the Father be indeed, and in truth, the *God* of the Son, as is moſt expreſsly declared in the forecited texts, then it will follow, that the Son is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, whether the term God be uſed to expreſs either *dominion*, or *priority* of *exiſtence* and *agency.*

If it be uſed to expreſs *dominion*, then the Son's inferiority and ſubordination to the Father, directly follows from the Father's being his God. For if the Father is the *governour* of the Son, then he is the Son's *ſuperiour* in that reſpect and he is ſo likewiſe in all other reſpects, it being impoſſible that an agent, who is *naturally ſubjected* to the government of another agent who is ſelfexiſting, and whoſe ſubjection naturally ariſes from, and is founded on his being derived from that other agent (which is the preſent caſe) ſhould in point of exiſtence, and all natural perfections, be equal to that neceſſarily exiſting being, which he, by nature,

nature, is ſubjected to; ſeeing he muſt of neceſſity be dependent upon, and be controulable by ſuch a governour. And as the Father is the God or governour of the Son, ſo the Son muſt of neceſſity be ſubordinate to him alſo; it being alike impoſſible, and a contradiction in terms, for an agent, who is abſolutely ſupreme in government, to have a governour over him which is the preſent caſe. And,

Tho the *Son* is himſelf called God in the ſcripture,, yet that does not alter the caſe, becauſe every *ſubordinate* governour is a god to thoſe he authority over. Like the centurion in the *goſpel*, who, tho he was ſet under authority, yet he had ſoldiers under him, uponwhom he exerciſed a delegated authority, when he ſaid to one man go, and he went; and to another come, and he came at his call. In like manner, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is inveſted with a delegated authority, and therefore he is a *God*: but then he himſelf is ſubject to another, who gave him all power or authority in heaven and in earth. Again,

If the term God be uſed to expreſs *priority* of *exiſtence* and *agency*, then the Son's *inferiority* directly follow, from the Father's being his *God*. For as in this caſe, the Father is the *fountain* of *being* and *agency* to the Son, ſo the Son muſt of neceſſity, both in point of exiſtence, agency, and all natural perfections, be dependant upon, and be controulable by the power and will of the Father, and therefore is inferiour to him. The Son's ſubordination, likewiſe, directly follows from hence, it being impoſſible, that a derived being (which is the caſe of the Son) ſhould be inveſted with abſolute ſupreme dominion, or be abſolutely the God over all; ſeeing he muſt needs be ſubject and ſubordinate to him, who is the fountain of being, and of authority to him.

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This argument is farther illuſtrated by ſuch texts as theſe, 1 *Cor.* xi. 3. *I would have you know, that the head of every man is Chriſt, and that the head of the woman is the man, and that the head of Chriſt is God.* 1 Cor. iii. 22. 23. *All are your's, and ye are Chriſt's and Chriſt is God's.* John iii. 16. *God ſo lov'd the world, that he gave his only begotton Son,* &c. And from hence I argue, that if the Father be in reality the *head*, the *proprietor*, and the *Father* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be the *property*, the *gift*, and at the *diſpoſal* of the Father, as is here declared, then our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is inferiour and ſubordinate, as aforeſaid; becauſe what are here aſcribed to, and ſpoken of Chriſt, are manifeſt tokens of dependency and controulableneſs, as they are incompatible with their contraries. So that the proof, which naturally ariſes from this argument, is a *third* demonſtration of the truth of the propoſition I am now maintaining.

ARGUMENT IV.

Fourthly, The Father is ſaid to exerciſe authority in commanding, and the Son ſubmiſſion in obeying the Father's commands; and conſequently, the Son is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

THAT the Father exerciſed authority in commanding, and the Son yielded obedience, as aforeſaid, ſee *Heb.* x. 5, 6, 7. *Wherefore, when he cometh into the world he ſaith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldeſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me; In burnt offerings and ſacrifices for ſin thou haſt no pleaſure; Then ſaid I, lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* John xii. 49, 50. *For I have not ſpoken of my ſelf, but the Father that ſent me, he gave me a commandment both what I ſhould ſay, and what*

what I ſhould ſpeak. And I know that his cammandment is everlaſting life; whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak. John xiv. 31. *As the Father gave me a commandment, even ſo I do.* John xv. 10. *If ye keep my commandments, ye ſhall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.* Heb. v. 8. *Tho he were a ſon, yet learned he obedience by the things which he ſuffer'd.*

In theſe texts it is ſet forth, that the Father exerciſed authority in commanding the Son; and likewiſe that the Son, *viz.* our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, exerciſed obedience and ſubjection, in doing, and ſuffering, according to the will and appointment of the Father. And from hence I argue, that if the truth of the caſe be as is repreſented in the above texts; then the Son is inferiour and ſubordinate, as aforeſaid. For as the exerciſing ſuch authority is an inſtance of, and thereby is an evident proof of ſuperiority with reſpect to the Father; ſo the exerciſe of ſuch ſubjection and obedience is an inſtance of, and thereby is an evident proof of inferiority with regard to the Son, there being no ſuch thing as authority and ſubjection with reſpect to two co-ordinate beings. And as the Son is inferiour to the Father, with reſpect to authority, ſo he muſt be the ſame in all other reſpects. For as his ſubjection is founded on his derivation from, and dependency upon the Father; ſo that derivation and dependency neceſſarily and unavoidably ſet him below, or render him inferiour to the Father in all reſpects whatever: becauſe dependency and controulableneſs, which is the caſe of the *Son*, cannot be equally great, or equally valuable, with independency and uncontroulableneſs, which is the caſe of the *Father*.

The Son's ſubordination to the Father will likewiſe follow from hence. For as he himſelf is under

der authority; ſo the authority which he is inveſted with cannot poſſibly be ſupreme: it being an abſurdity, and a contradiction in terms, to ſuppoſe an agent, who is abſolutely ſupreme in government, is, or can be, ſubjected to, and under the government of another, which is the preſent caſe. And therefore, as the Father has exerciſed his authority in commanding the Son, and the Son has likewiſe exerciſed his ſubmiſſion and obedience in doing, and ſuffering according to the will and appointment of the Father: ſo this I urge, as a farther proof of the grand propoſition I am now maintaining.

ARGUMENT V.

Fifthly, the Son is the Father's agent, in thoſe acts which are aſcribed to him, and the Son receiv'd from the Father, both direction and ability for their performance: conſequently the Son is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

THAT our Lord Jeſus Chriſts is the Father's agent, &c. ſee *Heb.* i. 2. *Whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds.* Eph. iii. 9. *Which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt.* John v. 19. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, the Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do; for what things ſoever he doth, theſe alſo doth the Son likewiſe.* Verſe 22. *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* John viii. 28. 29. *Then ſhall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of my ſelf, but as the Father hath taught me, I do theſe things. And he that ſent me is with me, the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always*

always thoſe things that pleaſe him. John iii. 5. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* John iv. 34. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work.* John vi. 28. *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me.* John xiv. 31. *As the Father gave me commandment, ſo I do.* Matt. xxviii. 18. *All power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth.* Acts ii. 22. *A man approved of God among you by miracles wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him, in the midſt of you, as ye yourſelves alſo know.*

Here we ſee, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is expreſsly declared to be the agent, the miniſter, and meſſenger of the Father; and that he received his power and his inſtructions from, and conſtantly acted in obedience to the will, and by the direction of his Father. And from hence I argue, that if the truth of the caſe be as it is repreſented in the texts above, then our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is inferiour and ſubordinate to his Father, it being abſurd and ridiculous to ſuppoſe, that an agent who is abſolutely ſupreme in point of exiſtence, agency, and dominion, that is, who is the original fountain of being, agency, and authority, that ſuch an one ſhould be the agent, the miniſter and meſſenger of another, and that he ſhould act by the power, and according to the inſtructions, and in ſubmiſſion to the will and commandment of another; I ſay, that this is an abſurd and ridiculous ſuppoſition: and ſeeing this is the caſe of the Son of God our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, therefore I urge this as a manifeſt proof, that he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

ARGUMENT VI.

Sixthly, It is the Son's expreſs declaration in this matter, viz. *that he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father; and ſurely his teſtimony is a ſufficient foundation for our faith to reſt upon; and conſequently that he is in himſelf what he hath declared himſelf to be, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God.*

THAT our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath declared thus of himſelf, ſee *Mark* xiii. 32. *But of that day and hour knoweth no man* (or no one) *no not the angels which are in heaven, e ther the Son, but the Father.* Here I obſerve, that if we admit that groundleſs and unſcriptural diſtinction, of two rational natures in Chriſt, *viz.* a *human* and a *divine*, (as it is commonly expreſſed) it will not help the caſe; becauſe the Son, in his moſt exalted and higheſt nature, is declared ignorant of the Day and hour referred too. This will evidently appear to be the caſe, if we obſerve the gradations, or ſeveral ſteps by which our Lord aſcends from one ſpecies of being to another, and declares them all ignorant of that day, till he cometh to him, who is Being of beings, or him who as being originally in himſelf, and is the fountain of being to all others, *viz.* God the Father; and he is declared to have the knowledge of that day peculiar to himſelf, and excluſive of all others. That is, it is the Father alone (excluſive of all other beings, even of his only begotten Son) which hath the knowledge of that day and hour (at leaſt originally and uncommunicated) in himſelf; ſo that if the Son had the knowledge of that day and hour, yet it was by communication from the Father. And,

Firſt, Our Lord aſſerts, that of that day and hour knoweth *no man* (or no one) conſequently if it be admitted that Chriſt had two natures, a human

man and a divine, and if his human nature, in this place, is to be conſidered in a ſeperate and diſtinct capacity from his divine nature and if it be allowed that his human naturewas ignorant of what his divine did know, he would, as a man, or in his human nature, be included in this firſt aſſertion. For, ſaith Chriſt, of that day and hour knoweth *no man.* Then our Lord proceeds, by a *ſecond* ſtep to declare, that the knowledge of that day and hour was kept from a ſpecies of beings ſuperiour to man, *viz.* the *angels* which are in heaven; and which the text, to appearance, ſuppoſeth to have a greater meaſure of knowledge than man had, which is implied in thoſe words, *no not the angels*, &c. Then he proceeds, by a *third* ſtep, to a perſon which, to appearance, is conſidered ſuperiour to men and angels, as he is ſpoken of after, and ſtands diſtinguiſhed from them both, *viz.* the *Son*; and of him Chriſt declares, that he is *ignorant* of the day, which can imply no leſs, than that he could not have the knowledge of it from himſelf, but from his Father; and if the Father had not revealed to him he was actually ignorant of it then. And, *laſtly*, Chriſt aſſerts, that the knowledge of that day was peculiar to the Father; which, to ſay the leaſt, muſt ſignify, that the father alone had the knowledge of that day, in and from himſelf, without receiving it by communication from any other, as I ſaid before. Again,

John x. 27, 28, 29, 30. *My ſheep hear my voice, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life. and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand. I and my Father are one.* In theſe words our Lord obſerves, that his people are in a happy and ſafe condition as they are under his care.

care. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand.* Then he shews how they come to be thus safe in his hand, and that upon a *threefold* account. *First* as they were a treasure, given or committed to his care by the Father. *My Father which gave them me*, &c. And therefore it was reasonable to suppose, that he would, out of respect to his Father, whom he loved and served, take care of a gift and treasure that his Father had committed to his care; and it was likewise as reasonable to suppose, that the Father would give him ability sufficient to discharge that trust. *Secondly*, His people were safe in his hand, because the Father, who had committed them to his care, had power in himself sufficient to answer that end. *My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* In these words our Lord seems plainly to imply, that his own power, when considered separate from the power of the Father, was inferiour or below the power of the Father; and therefore, tho' his people's safety might be questioned, when under the guardianship of his power only, yet there could be no doubt of it, when they were under the covert of the Father's also. And that they were so he asserts, *thirdly*, that the Father did, and would communicate his power to him. *I and my Father are one.* Which is as much as if he had said, as the Father hath put the care of the church upon me; so he has put his *power* upon me also, to enable me to discharge that trust, and therefore my people must be in a safe condition in my hand. *I and my Father are one.* Not numerically, but one in the care and preservation of the church. The whole that I would observe from this passage is, that Christ makes the power of the Father to be *greater* than the power of any other, even greater

than his own, when his own power is conſidered ſeparate from the power of the Father. For if his own power had been equal to the Father's, then there would have been no need of declaring, that the Father's power was engaged for his people's ſafety, becauſe they would have been altogether as ſafe without it. Again,

John xiv 28. *Ye have heard, how that I ſaid unto you, I go away and come again unto you, if ye loved me ye would rejoice, becauſe I ſaid I go to the Father; for my Father is greater than I.* In this verſe our Lord ſhewed his diſciples his diſlike of that ſorrow, which they expreſſed at the apprehenſion of his departure from them, and withal telleth them, that his departure was a proper ground of joy to them, if they loved him; becauſe every lover rejoyceth at the good, and exaltation, and increaſe of happineſs that is conferred on his beloved. And that they might be ſatisfied his going from them would be for his promotion and good, he declares, that the Father, he was going to, was *greater* than *he*, and conſequently was able to give and confer on him whatever was neceſſary thereunto. But if our Lord was a co-ordinate being with the Father, he could not receive any ſuch benefit from him, as his argument here ſuppoſes. Nay he could not in his *human nature* (admitting that diſtinction) for if his human nature was perſonally united to the higheſt or ſupreme God, by its union with the Son (as in this caſe it is ſuppoſed to be) then Chriſt's human nature could not receive any thing from the Father, becauſe it received every thing that was in the Father from the Son, by its union with him. Again,

Matt. xxviii. 18. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* John v. 22. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the*

the Son. In theſe texts our Lord teſtifies of himſelf, that the power or authority which he was poſſeſſed of was given or committed to him by the Father. Under this head of argument, may likewiſe be placed thoſe texts, in which Chriſt diſowns the making himſelf equal with God, to be a juſt conſequence of what he at any time had ſaid. Thus,

John v. 17. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* From theſe words the *Jews* inferred, that he defamed the Father, by making himſelf equal to him; as in the words following. *Therefore the* Jews *ſought the more to kill him, becauſe he had not only broken the ſabbath, but ſaid alſo that God was his Father, making himſelf equal with God.* Then follows our Lord's reply in theſe words, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, the Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do, for what things ſoever the Father doth theſe doth the Son likewiſe: for the Father loveth the Son, and ſheweth him all things that himſelf doth, and he will ſhew him greater works than theſe, that ye may marvel.* In theſe words, ourLord doth not deny that blaſphemy was a juſt conſequence of his making himſelf equal with the Father; but he denies that his making himſelf equal with the Father, was a juſt conſequence of what he had ſaid. And this he does by aſſerting, that he could do nothing of himſelf, independent of the Father, and that what he did was by the ability, direction, and appointment of the Father, and conſequently that he was a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to him; and therefore their inference was unjuſt. And as they had taken offence at his ſaying, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*; he adds, that he ſhould perform *greater works* than theſe, by the enablement, direction, and appointment of the Father, *that they might marvel.*

This I take to be the ſenſe of the place. The Father's *barely ſhewing* Chriſt greater works than he had hitherto ſhown him, or Chriſt's working barely in *imitation* of the Father, neither of theſe could be a foundation for *marveling* to the *Jews*: whereas Chriſt's receiving direction and ability from his Father, to perform before the *Jews* greater works than he had hitherto done, would be a proper foundation for their *aſtoniſhment*. Again,

John x. 33. *The* Jews *anſwered him, for a good work we ſtone thee not, but for blaſphemy, and for that thou being a man makeſt thy ſelf God.* The occaſion of theſe words we have in the foregoing verſes, in which our Lord is ſaid to call God *his Father*, and that he and his Father were *one*; the *Jews* inferring from hence, that he had *defamed God*, in as much as he, who appeared to them to be but a man, ſhould ſet up himſelf to be a competitor with God, and upon this, the *Jews* took up ſtones to ſtone him: at which ſight Chriſt puts this queſtion to them, *Many good works have I ſhewed you from my Father for which of thoſe good works do you ſtone me?* To which the *Jews* anſwered, as above, that they did not ſtone him for any good work which he had done; but for *blaſphemy*, in that he made himſelf *God*, or *equal* to God. To which our Lord replyed, *Is it not written in your law, I ſaid ye are gods*: upon which Chriſt reaſons thus, *If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the ſcriptures cannot be broken) ſay ye of him whom the Father hath ſanctified and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid I am the Son of God.* In which reply, our Lord does not deny that the making himſelf God (in the *Jews* ſenſe of that word) would have been blaſphemy; but what he denies is, that the making himſelf the ſupreme

God

God, or equal to him, could be juſtly inferred from what he had ſaid, becauſe the ſcriptures have given the name god, to thoſe who were ſent in God's name; and therefore it could not be blaſphemy for him, who was in the moſt eminent manner ſent of God, to ſay, that he was the Son of God. Upon the whole, this is what I would remark from the two inſtances before us, *viz.* that our Lord was ſo far from encouraging the people's taking up an opinion of him, that he was the *ſupreme God*, or *equal* to him, that on the contrary he endeavours to *diſſuade* them from it, by ſhewing, that no ſuch thing could *juſtly* be *inferred* from what he had ſaid, which ſurely Chriſt would not have done, if the forementioned opinion had been true; becauſe, then what he ſaid and reaſoned upon the ſubject, tended naturlly to miſlead his hearers, and to obſtruct one end of his coming into the world, which he elſewhere tells us, was *to bear witneſs to the truth*, John xviii. 37.

The force of the preſent argument is as follows, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has expreſsly declared, that his Father is greater than he; yea greater than all: and that he has given unto him all power or authority to execute judgment in heaven and in earth. And from hence I argue, that if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is worthy of *credit*, and if his teſtimony is of *weight*, and fit to be relied upon in the preſent caſe, then he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father. But our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is himſelf a *principal* in the preſent queſtion, and therefore he muſt be a *proper judge* in the caſe; and conſequently his teſtimony ought to be admitted, as proper evidence. For, tho' mens teſtimonies are in ſome caſes *refuſed*, when they become evidences for themſelves, they being liable

to be partial in their own favour; yet the caſe is otherwiſe, when they become evidences againſt themſelves, then their teſtimony is admitted, allowing them to have the exerciſe of their reaſon: and this is the preſent caſe, in which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be ſaid to be an evidence *againſt himſelf*; like *John* the *Baptiſt*, when the queſtion was put to him, Whether he was the Chriſt or not? he confeſſed he was not. So in like manner our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, even before the queſtion aroſe, Whether he was the ſupreme God, or not? he freely confeſſed he was not; and frankly and generouſly aſcribed ſupremacy to his Father to whom only it belonged. And, as our Lord gave teſtimony, as above, in a caſe in which he was a proper judge, and in which his evidence, in reaſon, ought to be admitted; ſo if *Paul*, or *Cephas*, or an *angel* from heaven ſhould declare any thing, which ſeemeth to be inconſiſtent with, or contrary to what our Lord has ſo expreſsly declared, then their Teſtimony ought to *yeild* to that of Chriſt, or elſe to be rejected. That is, they are to be underſtood in ſuch a ſenſe, as is conſiſtent with, and perfectly reconcilable to the teſtimony of Chriſt, or elſe to be ſet aſide as of no weight in the preſent queſtion. I ſay, this ought in reaſon to be the caſe, ſuppoſing their teſtimonies ſeemed to claſh, as aforeſaid. For as Chriſt muſt be allowed to be the *beſt judge*; ſo ſurely his *veracity* is as fit to be *relied on* as the others, and therefore his teſtimony ought to be admitted as proper evidence. And this I urge as a farther proof of the propoſition I undertook to maintain.

ARGUMENT VII.

Seventhly, The Son did pray to the Father in behalf of himſelf; conſequently the Son is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

PRAYER I take to be (when offered up for the petitioner) the act of a *dependent being*, whereby the mind is carried out in the act of deſire, either after ſome good not enjoyed, or for the Continuation of that good when enjoyed; or for a deliverance from ſome evil either felt or feared, ariſing from a ſenſe of his *own inability* to procure that good, or the continuance of it, or to remove or prevent the evil he fears. And when prayer is a rational act, it is directed to a being who has ability, or is ſuppoſed to have ability to confer, or continue the good thing prayed for, and to remove, or prevent the evil prayed againſt. And, that our Lord did pray to the Father, as aforeſaid, ſee *John* xvii. 1. *Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son alſo may glorify thee.* Again, verſe v. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.* John xii. 27. 28. *Now is my ſoul troubled, and what ſhall I ſay, Father, ſave me from this hour, but for this cauſe came I unto this hour; Father, glorify thy name,* &c. Matt. xxvi. 39. *and ſo on. And he went away a little farther and fell on his face and prayed; ſaying, if it be poſſible let this cup paſs from me, nevertheleſs not as I will but as thou wilt.*——*He went away again the ſecond time and prayed; ſaying, O my Father, if this cup may not paſs away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.* Matt. xxvi. 53. *Thinkeſt thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he will ſend me more than twelve legions of angels,* &c. Luke xxiii. 46. *And when*

Jeſus

Jeſus, had cryed with a loud voice, he ſaid, Father into thine hands I commend my ſpirit; and when he had ſo ſaid, he gave up the ghoſt. Heb. v. 7. *Who in the days of his fleſh, when he had offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared,* &c.

In theſe texts it is declared, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did frequently make application to God by *prayer* in behalf of *himſelf*; and from hence I argue, that if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt did really want, and could not procure to himſelf what he prayed to his Father for (which his prayer implies) then this is a manifeſt proof of his being in a ſtate of dependency upon his Father; and conſequently, that he is inferiour and ſubordinate to him, as I have ſhewn above. But ſurely, our Lord did not trifle in his addreſſes to his Father, by praying for what he did not want, or what he could have procured to himſelf; but on the contrary, he ſtood in need of help, and accordingly he addreſſed himſelf to his Father, and was *heard* and *helped* in that he feared. And this I urge, as a farther proof of the propoſition I have now under conſideration.

ARGUMENT VIII.

Eighthly, and laſtly, The Son did humble and debaſe himſelf, from being rich he became poor, he was in a greater and leſſer degree of glory; conſequently he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

THAT this was the ſtate and condition of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſee *John.* xvii. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory I had with thee before the world was.* What that glory was, which Chriſt here prayed to his Father to be reſtored to,

is needleſs to enquire after; it being ſufficient to my preſent purpoſe to obſerve, that it was ſuch glory as Chriſt had formerly enjoyed, but then was deſtitute of, and deſired that he might be reſtored to it. 2 *Cor.* viii.. 9. *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that tho' he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich.* The Apoſtle in the beginning of this chapter endeavoured to perſuade the believing *Corinthians* to a liberal contribution to the poor chriſtians in *Judea*, from the example of the neighbouring churches of *Macedonia*; who had to their ability, (and that too at a time of their deep poverty and affliction) contributed willingly, and of their own accord, towards the relief of their poor brethren. And tho' the Apoſtle had no ſpecial command from Chriſt for what he did in this affair; yet that he might make his exhortation ſucceſsful upon the *Corinthians*, he ſets before them the *example of Chriſt*, which as chriſtians they could not but think themſelves obliged to follow, and eſpecially as they themſelves were partakers of his graces. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that tho' he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, tha tye, through his poverty, might be rich.*

The force of the preſent argument is as follows. In the above texts is ſet forth a *diverſity* of *ſtates* with reſpect to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *viz.* his being poſſeſſed of, and his being ſeparated from, either a ſtate or a degree of glory. His being rich, and his becoming poor. And from hence I argue, that if the truth of the caſe be as it is here repreſented, that is, if the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, was really under ſuch a diverſity of ſtates, and did paſs through thoſe *changes*, as is declared in the texts above, then he is a dependent controulable being; it being abſolutely impoſſible that an independent uncontroulable being ſhould be capable

pable of ſuch different ſtates, as is the preſent caſe: and if the Son be a dependent being, the conſequence is unavoidable, *viz.* that he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father (as I have ſhewn above) and the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

Having, in the precedent arguments proved, or made good, the propoſition I firſt laid down, *viz. That the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God*: I now proceed to examine the moſt material objections, which that *propoſition*, and the *proof* by which it is ſupported, are liable to. And,

OBJECTION I.

Firſt, It may be objected, that the above propoſition very much detracts from the honour and dignity of the perſon of our Lord, and leſſens the value of his ſufferings and death, by which alone the redemption of mankind was wrought out; and conſequently, it is groundleſs and falſe.

TO the *firſt* part of the objection I anſwer, that it is no detraction from the honour and dignity of a perſon to deny him to be what he *really is not*. It is no detraction from the Dignity of *Thomas Herbert, Earl of Pembroke*, to ſay, that he *is not the King of Great Britain*; becauſe, it is only a denying him to be what he really is not. To detract from any one's dignity, or honour, is to deny him to be what he *really is*. Thus to ſay, that *Thomas Herbert* is not a *peer*, but only a *commoner* of *Great Britain*, would be to detract from his dignity and honour; becauſe he is really *Earl* of *Pembroke*, and conſequently is more than a commoner, and is really a *peer* of *Great Britain*. And therefore ſeeing

I have not denied our Lord to be any thing that he really is; but only have ſaid that of him, which he hath ſaid of himſelf, and what the ſcriptures teſtify of him, it muſt be a very unjuſt charge to ſay, I have detracted from his dignity and honour; and conſequently the *firſt* part of the objection is falſe and groundleſs.

To the *ſecond* part, *viz.* that the above propoſition *leſſens* the *value* of Chriſt's ſufferings and death; I anſwer, that the greater or leſſer value of any ſuffering (I think) muſt ariſe, either from the greater or leſſer *degree* of that ſuffering, or the more or leſs *valuable end* which it is made ſubſervient to, or the greater or leſs valuableneſs of the *agent*, who voluntarily chuſes to undergo that ſuffering: and when we have conſidered the caſe, in all thoſe views, I think it will appear, that the propoſition here referred to, does by no means leſſen the value of Chriſt's ſufferings and death. For as to the greater or leſſer degree of ſuffering, or the more or leſs valuable end, which that ſuffering is made ſubſervient to, theſe are the ſame with reſpect to the ſufferings of Chriſt, whether the forementioned propoſition be *true* or *falſe*. His ſufferings were the ſame, and the end which they were made ſubſervient to was the ſame alſo; and as to the valuableneſs of the ſufferer, or the agent which voluntarily choſe to undergo that ſuffering, when the caſe is examined, the difference poſſibly may not appear to be ſo great, as it is uſually thought to be; and may determine againſt, rather than in favour of thoſe who make this objection.

Cerinthus, and his followers (as the learned ſay) held that our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* ſuſtained two rational natures, and theſe acted in a ſeparate and diſtinct capacity one from the other; one of theſe they called *Jeſus*, and the other they called *Chriſt*:

Jeſus

Jeſus they ſay was of an *earthly*, and Chriſt of an *heavenly* extraction; and that when Jeſus entered upon his *paſſion*, Chriſt took wing and flew away from him and left him to ſuffer alone; conſequently, according to the *Cerinthians*, the *agent* who ſuffered was but a meer *human creature*.

Sabellius, and his adherents (as it is ſaid) held that the *Father*, *Son*, *and Holy Ghoſt*, were but one diſtinct individual *agent* or *being*; tho' repreſented by, and under ſeveral diſtinct characters, upon account of his different dealings with his creatures; and that God was *united* to the man Chriſt Jeſus, and in, and by that union communicated a divine aſſiſtance to enable him to perform both actively and paſſively the whole will of God; but ſtill *the agent*, or being, who did perform that obedience was but a *man*. So that in this the *Cerinthians* and *Sabellians* agree, *viz.* that the *agent*, or *ſufferer*, in the perſon of Chriſt, was but a *meer human creature*.

Socinus, and his followers, are ſaid to acknowledge the diſtinct perſonality of the Father and the Son; but withal, that the Son was no more than a *man*, tho' he received a larger meaſure of knowledge, and power, and the like abilities than ever any other man did; and was called to tranſact in great affairs, ſuch as the redeeming and judging the world, the governing and watching over the church, and the like; as never any other man was called to, or entruſted with. So that *Cerinthus*, and *Sabellinus*, and *Socius*, and their followers, agree in this, *viz.* that the *ſufferer*, in the perſon of Chriſt, was but a *meer man*.

The preſent *Orthodox* (as they eſteem themſelves) hold the diſtinct perſonality of the Father and the Son; that is, that theſe are two diſtinct agents or beings. This, I think, they may be ſaid to hold, if one can form any judgment of what

what they hold (which in the preſent caſe is ſomewhat difficult) and in this they diſſent from *Sabellius.* And they likewiſe hold, that the Son, or ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, was perſonally united to a man, and that the aforeſaid ſecond Perſon, and that man, in their united ſtate, conſtitute the Perſon of Chriſt; and in this they diſſent from *Socinus.* They alſo hold, that the divine and human natures, in the Perſon of Chriſt, did act in a ſeparate and diſtinct capacity one from another, and in this they agree with *Cerinthus.* They likewiſe hold, that in the ſufferings of Chriſt, it was the *human nature only* which acted, and bore thoſe ſufferings, and that Chriſt's divine nature *did not*, or *could not* ſuffer, or bear any ſhare or part of that ſuffering: ſo that in this, both *Cerinthus*, and *Sabellius*, and *Socinus*, and the preſent *Orthodox* agree, *viz.* that the *agent* which *ſuffered* was but *barely a man.*

Thoſe who are (by way of contempt) called *Arians* hold, that the Father and the Son are two diſtinct agents or beings; and that the Son is not the very ſupreme God himſelf, but the *Son* of the ſupreme God: that the Son of God, was his Father's *agent* in making this viſible world; and conſequently, that he had a *perſonal exiſtence* antecedent to his conception in the womb of the Virgin, and that in his conception he condeſcended to be united to, and take upon him human fleſh, acted in, by, and upon a human body, or a body formed and brought forth as all other human bodies are, and this conſtituted him a *man*; tho', with reſpect to the dignity of his ſpiritual part, and his near relation to God, he was more than a man, or at leaſt more than any other man was; and this ſpiritual part, was that *agent*, in the Perſon of Chriſt, who choſe to bear and ſuffer all that pain and anguiſh which Chriſt underwent: ſo,

ſo, that according to theſe, the *agent* which ſuffered in the Perſon of Chriſt, was *more than a man* (if the expreſſion may be allowed) *viz.* he was *that agent* by whom God made the worlds; and this opinion ſeems moſt agreeable to the ſcriptures.

Which of theſe various opinions is the truth is not the preſent queſtion; but which of them ſets the *greateſt value* upon the *agent*, or *ſufferer* in the Perſon of Chriſt, and ſo ſets the greateſt value upon that *ſuffering*. And this, I think, is plainly the caſe of thoſe who are called *Arians*. They conſider the *ſufferer*, or that agent who bore and ſuffered in the perſon of Chriſt, to be that *very ſame agent* by whom God made the worlds. Whereas the *Cerinthians*, *Sabellians*, *Socinians*, and the Preſent *Orthodox*, conſider and eſteem the *ſuffering agent*, in the Perſon of Chriſt, to be no more than *barely a man*. And if that man received *aſſiſtance* from God, or was united to him, it alters not the caſe, becauſe ſuch aſſiſtance and ſuch union, does not *alter* or *change* the *ſuffering ſubject*: he is ſtill *but a man* in their eſtimation, and therefore the *value* which ariſes to his *ſuffering* from his *perſon*, can be no other than what ariſes from him in the *capacity* of a *man*, as it was in that capacity, and that only in which he ſuffered. And foraſmuch as in the above propoſition, the ſuffering agent, in the perſon of Chriſt, is not conſidered, or repreſented as *leſs valuable*, than what he really is, or than any chriſtian of any denomination repreſents him to be; therefore the charging that propoſition with *leſſening* the value of Chriſt's ſuffering and death, is *unjuſt* and *groundleſs*.

OBJECTION

OBJECTION II.

Secondly, It may be objected, that the forementioned arguments fall to the ground, becauſe the ſcriptures, which are brought to prove and ſupport them, are miſapplied, by applying them to the divine, as well as the human nature of Chriſt: whereas, if they had been rightly applied, it would have been to the human nature alone, conſidered in a ſeparate and diſtinct capacity from the divine nature in Chriſt.

THIS being the *grand refuge*, which men generally fly to, under every difficulty in the preſent queſtion, I ſhall be the more particular in examining it. The plain *engliſh* of which I take to be this, *viz.* that *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is conſtituted of *two diſtinct individual moral agents*, which agents are characterized by thoſe terms, *viz. Chriſt's divine* and *human nature*; and that what is ſaid of and applied to Chriſt in *general*, in the texts above, is in ſtrictneſs applicable only to *that part* of Chriſt which is called his *human nature*; and therefore, tho' that part of Chriſt be proved to be inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, from the texts before mentioned, yet nothing can be concluded from thence, with reſpect to the *other part* of Chriſt, or Chriſt at large, as including the two agents aforeſaid; and that the other part of Chriſt, *viz.* that moral agent which conſtitutes his *divine nature*, this agent comes in *equal ſharer* with the Father, and a certain third agent in ſupremacy of exiſtence, agency, and dominion; which three moral agents conſtitute the one ſupreme God, whoſe *complex idea* is expreſſed by that character. This, I think, is a fair repreſentation of what is urged in the preſent caſe, ſo far as men talk or write intelligibly, or as one can judge of their meaning by their words. To which

I anſwer; the *Two* points advanced above, *viz.* that the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is conſtituted of a *coalition* or *ſociety of agents*, whether *two* or *two hundred*; and that the one ſupreme God is likewiſe conſtituted of a *coalition* or *ſociety of agents*, whether *three*, or *three thouſand*; theſe are propoſitions which are *meerly fictitious*, and are ſo far from having any foundation in the *Bible*, that on the contrary the *Bible* every where ſuppoſes and expreſſes otherwiſe. For when our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is there *ſpoken of*, when he *ſpeaks* or is *ſpoken to*, it is only as *one agent*, and not as a ſociety of agents. The caſe is exactly the ſame with reſpect to the one ſupreme God, when he is *ſpoken* of in the *Bible*, or when he *ſpeaks* or is *ſpoken to*, it is always in ſuch a way as ſuppoſes and expreſſes him to be but only *one agent*. And if after all this, men will take the freedom to aver, that the Son of God, and that God, himſelf, are each of them a coalition or ſociety of agents, as aforeſaid; and if they will likewiſe aver, that thoſe propoſitions are contained in the *Bible*; this is, by a juſt conſequence, averring, that the *Bible* is unqualified for being the *rule* of *truth*, in this or any other caſe. For,

If ſuch a notorious *perverſion* and *abuſe of language*, as aforeſaid, can be juſtly charged upon the *Bible* in one inſtance, and with relation to one point, then it may be ſo in many others: and if God acts ſo *unfair* a part in this particular, by delivering his mind in ſuch a way, as naturally and apparently tends to miſlead us, which is the preſent caſe, then we muſt of courſe be under the greateſt *uncertainty*, with regard to knowing what he intends, by any revelation that he makes to his creatures. By the term *two*, he may intend *twenty*; and when he ſaith, *hear O Iſrael, the Lord thy God is one Lord*; he may not intend to ex-

expreſs, that the God of *Iſrael* is only *one individual Lord* (which is the natural ſenſe of the words) but on the contrary, that it is a *ſociety of Lords*; and as the *number* of individuals, which conſtitute that ſociety, are not revealed in the *Bible*; ſo it is utterly above our ability to diſcover their number. And when he ſaith, *I am God, and there is none beſide me*, he may intend to expreſs ideas, which are *contrary* to what common uſage has fixed to thoſe words. That is, he may intend to expreſs that he is *not God*, and that there are *many others* beſide him. I ſay, if God in the revelation he gives to his creatures, perverts the uſe of words, and miſapplies them in one inſtance, as above, he may do the ſame in many others. And if this be the caſe, then nothing can be fairly concluded from the *Bible*; and conſequently this, and every other controverſy (in which the appeal is made to the *Bible*) muſt ceaſe and be at an end.

Beſides, If it ſhould be admitted, that the term *God*, in the *Bible*, is uſed to expreſs a coalition or ſociety of neceſſarily exiſting agents, which are of one ſpecies or kind, then this is to admit a *plurality* of *ſupreme Deities* or *Gods*. It is not enough for the avoiding of this charge to urge, that theſe are inſeparably united in *counſel*, in *acting*, and the like; becauſe ſuch union does not *deſtroy* their *individuation*. It is true, this denies them to be a plurality of Gods, which are at *variance* and *diſcord* among themſelves; but then it ſuppoſes them to be a *plurality* of *Deities*, which are in *unity* and *concord*; and ſurely they are not the leſs a plural in number, by their uniting in council, in acting, *&c.* And,

If there are a plurality of neceſſarily exiſting agents, as aforeſaid; yet ſurely there is no foundation for confining them to the number *three*, ſeeing they may be *three millions*, or any other

number, for any thing we know to the contrary. If it ſhould be ſaid, that St. *John* has confined them to that number. 1 John v. 7. *The Father the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one.* I anſwer, if the words of St. *John* are *rightly applied* in the preſent caſe, which ſurely they are not, then his teſtimony is *confronted* by that of our *Saviour*, who by a like way of ſpeaking confines them to the number *two*. John x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* And I think that the teſtimony of *Chriſt* muſt be allowed to be as *good* an *authority*, and as *fit* to be *relyed on* as that of St. *John*. But whoever reads thoſe texts, and reflects with an unprejudiced mind upon the ſubjects to which they relate, I am perſwaded will eaſily ſee, that this is not their ſenſe, and that St. *John*, and our *Saviour*, are not at ſuch *variance* as they are here repreſented to be.

If there ſhould be urged, in favour of a plurality of neceſſarily exiſting agents, as aforeſaid, ſuch texts as theſe, Gen. i, 26. *And God ſaid let us make man, in our own image, after our likeneſs*, &c. I anſwer, *firſt*, the uſual reply in this caſe is, that the terms here referred to are only a *mode* of *ſpeech*, which was common to the *monarch* of the *eaſt*, and that God is here repreſented as ſpeaking in the language of thoſe monarchs; now, if this be the caſe, then the urging ſuch texts is trifling. But ſuppoſing theſe terms are to be conſidered as *plurals*, which expreſs more than one agent; then I anſwer, *ſecondly*, tho' here are ſeveral plural expreſſions made uſe of, yet they are not applied to *God*, nor ſuppoſed to be applicable to him, but the contrary. God is here repreſented and ſpoken of, as one individual agent, addreſſing himſelf and ſpeaking to another agent or agents: and he that ſpeaks, and he or they that are ſpoken to, are expreſſed by thoſe plurals, *us*, *our*, &c. if it

ſhould

ſhould be aſked, who, or what thoſe agents were which God is here repreſented as ſpeaking to, the anſwer is, that the hiſtory is ſilent in this matter. This I think is manifeſtly the ſtate of the caſe; and therefore, for men to found the doctrine of a plurality of neceſſarily exiſting agents, whoſe *complex idea* is expreſſed by the term *God*, upon ſuch texts as theſe, in oppoſition to the whole tenour of the *Bible*, and the moſt expreſs texts to the contrary, is a moſt prodigious *bold attempt*.

If it ſhould be farther urged, that the one ſupreme God is not a coalition or ſociety of agents, but only one individual agent, and that in this agent there are *three* individual *properties*, or *three* individual *modes* of exiſtence, or *three ſomewhats*, or the like; and that *one* of thoſe properties, or modes, or ſomewhats, and one only was united to the man Chriſt Jeſus, and in that its united ſtate it conſtitutes Chriſt's *divine nature*; and that thoſe texts in the precedent arguments, tho' they are in the *Bible* applyed to Chriſt without any limitation, yet they are in ſtrictneſs only applicable to that part of Chriſt which is called his *human nature*; whereas the other part of Chriſt, which is called his divine nature (whether it be a mode, or property, a ſomewhat, or the like) comes in for an *equal ſhare* of ſupremacy of exiſtence, agency, and dominion, with the other *two* properties, or modes, or ſomewhats, or parts of God, as mentioned above; which *two* parts of God, are, by way of diſtinction, called the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt.

To all this I think it ſufficient to anſwer, that it is the product of a *fruitful fancy* only, and that it has no foundation in *nature or ſcripture*. Not in nature, there being no ſuch thing as a property or manner of exiſting *abſtracted* from being, as I have already obſerved. And therefore to ſuppoſe

that a mode, or property of the Deity, can be in ſuch an abſtracted and ſeparate capacity, as to be cloſely united to a man, whilſt the Deity or Being it ſelf is not thus united, but is in another ſeparate capacity from it; or that the Deity it ſelf with one of its properties, or modes of exiſtence is cloſely united to a man, whilſt the other modes, or properties of the Deity remain in a ſeparate capacity, and are not united with the Deity to that man; I ſay, theſe ſuppoſitions are ſhamefully *abſurd* and *ridiculous*. Beſides, there is but *one mode*, or manner of exiſtence in the Deity, *viz.* he exiſts, by an *abſolute neceſſity*, in the nature of things; and therefore to talk of God's exiſting under different modes, is alike abſurd and ridiculous. And,

As the abovementioned propoſitions are ſtranggers to nature, ſo they are likewiſe as much *ſtrangers* to the *Bible*. The *Bible* every where repreſents God as a *moral agent*, without dividing or diſtinguiſhing him into modes, or properties, or ſomewhats, as above; and this one agent it declares is the *God* and *Father* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or that one moral agent which the *Bible* Characterizes by that title; ſo that the dividing and diſtinguiſhing God, and Chriſt into parts, and parcels, as above, has no foundation either in *nature* or *ſcripture*.

I ſhall not take upon me to examine ſtrictly the foregoing ſchemes, in order to ſhew the confuſion and abſurdities that attend them; this would be a work of ſuch large extent, that I ſhould not know where, or when to end: but all that I ſhall farther add, is to deſire thoſe men who advance them, to conſider what juſt occaſion they give to unbelievers, to *inſult* and *triumph* over *chriſtianity*, as an abſurd and ridiculous thing, by repreſenting the *Bible* as the ground and foundation of that *patch-work*, with which they have dreſſed up Almighty God. At one time God is *three agents*; then

then he is but *one agent*; then he is *three properties*; then he is *three modes* of exiſtence; then *three ſomewhats*; and thus men have *rung* the *changes* as their ſchemes required, or as their fruitful fancies have invented, till they have brought the chriſtian religion into contempt.

But now, I hope, chriſtians will let the time paſt ſuffice them, to have mixed the pure wine of chriſtianity with the water of their own inventions; and that they will leave off wandring, as above, and return back to the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the goſpel. The *Bible* every where conſiders, and repreſents Almighty God, as only one individual moral agent; who, out of a tender regard to the happineſs and well-being of his creatures, at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſent unto them his ſervants, the *prophets*, and that laſt of all he ſent unto them his *Son*; not upon a different, but upon the ſame errand that he had ſent his ſervants, the prophets, before him, *viz.* to call them to repentance, and to bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs, and thereby to oblige them to render themſelves, the ſuitable and proper objects of God's mercy and grace. And this laſt meſſenger is likewiſe in the *Bible* repreſented, ſpoken to, and of, as only one individual moral agent, who, upon the account of his *office*, his *performances*, and his *near relation* to God, is characterized in the *Bible*, by *high* and *honourable titles*; but ſtill as the *Son*, the *meſſenger*, and the *miniſter* of the moſt high.

This is the ſtate of the caſe, as it ſtands in the goſpel, which is plain and intelligible, and to be underſtood by the meaneſt capacity. But when chriſtians, out of *reſpect* to their *crucified Maſter*, and upon the account of what he had done, and ſuffered for their ſakes, tried to *outvy* one another in *encomiums*, and *high appellations*; then they

ſpake

ſpake of him, and paid their reſpect to him, not as one whom God had exalted up into the throne, and placed on the right hand of the majeſty on high (which is the ſcripture account of the caſe) but as if he had been the very ſupreme God. And inſtead of treating him as the *Son*, *miniſter*, and *meſſenger* of the ſupreme Being (which ſtill they allow him to be) they ſpoke of him, and paid their reſpect to him, as the *moſt high God himſelf*. Yea, their pious zeal did not reſt here; for they almoſt *defied* the *Virgin Mary*, becauſe ſhe was his *mother*: and from hence ſprung all that confuſion and abſurdity, with which chriſtianity has been leaded in this particular. And ſad experience ſhews, that when once error grows grey with ag it becomes venerable, and wants neither votaries nor defenders. But, I hope, the preſent age, will ſhew themſelves to be men of underſtanding, who will examine and judge of things impartially, and according to the ſtrength of evidence that attends them, and not be led away by a jingle of words, which ſerve only to confound and perplex a ſubject, but not to evince the truth or falſeneſs of the propoſition to which they are applied.

Objection III.

Thirdly and laſtly, It may be objected, that the foregoing arguments do not prove what they are urged for; becauſe there are a great number of texts of ſcripture which plainly ſpeak and ſhew the contrary.

BY way of anſwer to this objection, I ſhall *examine* theſe texts, and thereby ſhew that not any thing can fairly be concluded from them, which will *weaken* or *take off* the force of thoſe arguments.

Pſalm xlv. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* The ſtrength of this text I apprehend lies, either in the term *God*, or in his *throne*'s being *for ever*

ever and *ever*, as it is brought for an objection in this caſe. To which I anſwer, that the *Pſalmiſt*'s calling the Son *God*, does no more prove him equal to, and co-ordinate with the Father, than his calling *magiſtrates* or *prophets* gods, does prove them equal to, or co-ordinate with him. Of which, ſee *Pſ.* lxxxii. 1. 6. *God ſtandeth in the congregation of princes, he is a judge among gods. I have ſaid ye are gods; and ye are all the children of the moſt high.* As to his throne being for ever and ever, this can ſignify no more, than its continuance to the *laſt general judgment*; becauſe St. *Paul* affirms, in 1 Cor. *v.* 24. 28. *That then Chriſt ſhall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father, and that the Son himſelf ſhall be ſubject*; *that God* (*viz.* the Father) *may be all in all.* But admitting that it did ſignify to *eternity*, it will not follow that the Son is equal to the Father, any more than a man's continuing to eternity, will make that man equal to him. However, to put this matter beyond diſpute, the *Pſalmiſt*, in the words following, declares, that this God, whoſe throne is for ever and ever, has a God above him. *Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.*

Proverbs viii. 22, 23, 24, 25, 30. *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; When there were no depths I was brought forth; When there were no fountains abounding with water; Before the mountains were ſettled, before the hills was I brought forth; then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him.* From hence it is inferred, that the Son is *co-eternal* with the Father; and conſequently *co-equal* to him. To which I anſwer, that *Solomon* in this, as well as in many other places of his book of *Proverbs*, repreſents *wiſdom* as aſſuming a *perſonal character*,

and

and ſpeaking of herſelf, as one who influenced almighty God in all his works, and as one who was always with him, even before the creation of this world. So that not any thing can be concluded from hence, with reſpect to the *Perſon* of the Son of God. But admitting *Solomon* refers to a *real perſon*, and that perſon was the *Son* of God; yet the expreſſions here made uſe of will not help the caſe at all. I have, in my *firſt* argument, clearly proved, that the Father is the *firſt ſupreme free cauſe* of the *Son's* being and exiſtence; and there is nothing in this place of ſcripture which *contradicts* it, but on the contrary *corroborates* it. Thus verſe 24. *When there were no depths I was brought forth.* From which I obſerve, that if the Son was *brought forth*, and if time hath taken plaee ſince he was brought forth, as is here declared, then it will unavoidably follow, that he is *not eternal*, in the *firſt* and ſtricteſt ſenſe of that term. And when it is ſaid, verſe 23. *I was ſet up from everlaſting*; this can imply no other than that he was before the creation of this world; as it is explained in the next words; *from the beginning or ever the earth was.* Again, *When there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were ſettled, before the hills was I brought forth*; ſo that the moſt which can fairly be inferred from hence is, that the Son had a Being with his Father, *before* this viſible world had a being; but it will by no means follow that he is *co-eternal* with, or *co-equal* to the Father. And

Whereas it is ſaid, verſe 30. *Then* (that is, when he appointed the foundations of the earth, as at verſe 29.) *I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him.* This is what hath been already allowed, *viz.* that the Son was not only with the

Father,

Father, but alſo that he was the Father's *agent* in creating the world; he was as one that had been brought up with him, and was daily his delight. The figure is taken from the familiarity which is among *children*, tho' of different qualities as to the things of this world; and it ſhews the *condeſcention* of the Father, and the *intereſt* the Son has in his affections; but it cannot poſſibly prove the Son's equality with him. Our Lord uſed the like familiarity with his *diſciples*, yea he condeſcended to waſh their feet; but then it will not follow that they were his equals.

Iſaiah vi. 9.10 *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon his throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple; And he ſaid, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed but perceive not, make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert and be healed.* Compared with *John* xii. 39. 40. 41. *Therefore they could not believe, becauſe that* Iſaiah *ſaid, he hath blinded their eyes, and hardned their hearts, that they ſhould not ſee with their eyes, nor underſtand with their hearts, and be converted, and I ſhould heal them. Theſe things, ſaid* Iſaias, *when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him.* From theſe laſt words of St. *John*, concerning *Iſaiah*'s viſion, it is inferred, that he whom *Iſaiah* ſaw ſitting upon a throne was our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and conſequently that he is equal to, and co-ordinate with the Father.

In anſwer to which I obſerve, that *almighty God* is ſometimes ſet forth in ſcripture as a great King ſitting upon a throne of majeſty; thus, 1 Kings xxii. 19. *I ſaw the Lord ſitting on his throne, and all the hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him.* Pſalm ciii. 19. *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven.* Rev. iv. 2. *And behold a throne was ſet in heaven, and one ſat on the throne.* Chap. v. 1.

And

And I ſaw in the right hand of him that ſat on the throne a book. Verſe 6, 7. *And I beheld, and lo in the midſt of the throne a Lamb, and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that ſat on the throne.* And thus, the great God is repreſented to *Iſaiah*, in which viſion *Iſaiah* heard the voice of the Lord (that is the voice of him that ſat on the throne) ſaying, *whom ſhall I ſend, who will go for us?* to which *Iſaiah anſwered, here am I, ſend me.* Verſe 8. And then it follows, *go and tell this people*, &c. In which viſionary meſſage, the prophet was made to underſtand, that tho' he was to declare the word of the Lord to the people of *Iſrael*; yet ſuch was their ſtubbornneſs and blindneſs, that they would not hear nor repent, and that this ſtubbornneſs and blindneſs would remain upon them ſo long as they ſhould be a people. And St *John* ſhewed, that the ſtubbornneſs and blindneſs which was upon the *Jews*, in rejecting the Meſſiah, and the tidings of ſalvation by him, was no more than what had been propheſied of them long before by *Iſaiah*. And whereas it is ſaid by St. *John*, *theſe things ſpake* Iſaiah, *when he ſaw his glory, and ſpake of him.* This I conceive was ſpoken of *God* the *Father*; For the word him, I think, plainly refers to that Lord ſpoken of, verſe 38. *Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Theſe things ſaid* Iſaiah (*viz.* the things ſpoken of in the 38 and 40 verſes) *when he ſaw and ſpake of his glory*, viz. him whom *Iſaiah* had complained to, when he ſaid, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* &c. And that it was God the Father, ſee the place it is quoted from *Iſaiah* liii. 1. *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm* (*viz.* Chriſt) *of the Lord* (*viz.* the Father) *revealed? for he* (*viz.* Chriſt) *ſhall grow up before him* (*viz.* the Father) *as a tender plant*, &c. verſe 4. *Yet we did eſteem him*

(*viz.*

(*viz.* Chriſt) *ſtricken, ſmitten of God* (*viz.* the Father) *and afflicted.* Verſe 6. *And the Lord* (*viz.* the Father) *hath laid on him* (*viz.* Chriſt) *the iniquity of us all.*

Iſaiah viii. 13. 14. *Sanctify the Lord of hoſt himſelf, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread: And he ſhall be for a ſanctuary, but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houſes of* Iſarel. Compared with the 1 *Peter* ii. 6. 7. 8. *It is contained in the ſcriptures, behold I lay in* Zion *a chief corner-ſtone elect precious, and he that believeth on him ſhall not be confounded; but unto them that be diſobedient, a ſtone of ſtumbling and a rock of offence.* And, *Romans* ix. 33. *As it is written, behold I lay in* Zion *a ſtumbling-ſtone and rock of offence; and whoſoever beleiveth on him ſhall not be aſhamed.* Here, becauſe St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* apply *Iſaiah*'s words (viz. *he ſhall be for a ſanctuary, and for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence*) to our Lord Chriſt; therefore ſome men apply the words before to him alſo viz. *ſanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread*: and from hence it is inferred that he is co-ordinate with the Father.

To which I anſwer, that the words here referred to, are ſpoken of *God* the *Father*; and the words following are ſpoken by the Father of the *Son*; but the words of the prophet being *obſcure*, they needed a *ſupplement* to explain them, which ſupplement both St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* have added, and that ſhews it plainly to be ſpoken by the Father, of the Son. *Behold I* (*viz.* the Father) *lay in* Zion *a chief corner-ſtone*, this corner-ſtone was *Chriſt*, but then it was the *Father* which laid in *Zion*; and therefore it was ſaid of the Father, *ſanctify the Lord of hoſt himſelf, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.*

Iſaiah ix. 6 *Unto us a child is born, unto us a*

Son

Son is given, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders, and he ſhall be called the wonderful counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the prince of peace. Theſe high titles being given to the Son, from hence it is inferred than he is equal to the Father.

In anſwer to which I obſerve, that theſe titles were to be given to *that perſon*, who is ſaid to be both a *child and a Son*; which are by no means applicable to the ſupreme God. Again, they were to be given to this perſon, not upon account of any thing that he *was*, or that he *had* when theſe words were ſpoken; but upon account of what he *would be* when the government ſhould be upon his ſhoulders. *And he ſhall* (or then he ſhall) *be called the wonderful counſellor*, &c. And as theſe titles were to be given to Chriſt, when in the exerciſe of his miniſtry; ſo the ſcriptures ſhew plainly in what ſenſe they are applicable to him. *Firſt, the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders.* That is, the care and government of the church ſhall be committed to him. Col. i. 18. *He is the head of the body the church.* John x. 27. 29. *My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; my Father which gave them me is greater than all. Secondly, He ſhall be called the wonderful counſellor;* becauſe as he is in the boſom of the Father, John i. 18. *And as the Father ſheweth him all things that himſelf doth*; John v. 20. So it is he that reveals the Father's counſels to mankind. *John* xv. 15. It is he that hath brought the good tidings of peace and ſalvation, and that brought life and immortality to light by the goſpel. 2 *Tim.* i. 10. *Thirdly, He ſhall be called the* (or a) *mighty God*, or governour, becauſe he received (or was to receive) a mighty power from the Father, and was appointed to execute his will. *Matt.* ii. 18. 28. *John* v. 22. and thereby is mighty to ſave all that come

come to God by him. *Heb.* v. 9. and vii. 28. *Fourthly*, *He ſhall be called the Father*; becauſe his care and tenderneſs to his church ſhall be ſuch (and much more) as a fathers tenderneſs is to the fruit of his own body. *John* x. 11. 15 He ſhall be called an *everlaſting Father*, or a Father of the future age; becauſe his care of the church ſhall continue, as long as the ſun and moon endure. *Fifthly*, and *laſtly*, *He ſhall be called the prince of peace*; becauſe he is the purchaſer, and proclaimer of peace and ſalvation to mankind: it is he that is our peace-maker, that hath made our peace by the blood of his croſs. (*Eph.* ii. 13. to the end) Thus we ſee, our Lord, in the exerciſe of his miniſtry, anſwered thoſe high titles which the prophet declared ſhould be aſcribed to him; but then thoſe titles do by no means ſuppoſe him to be *equal to*, or to be the *ſupreme God*.

Jer. xxiii. 5. 6. *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will raiſe unto* David *a righteous branch, and a King ſhall reign and proſper, and ſhall execute judgment and juſtice in the earth: In thoſe days* Judah *ſhall be ſaved, and* Iſrael *ſhall dwell ſafely, and this is his name by which he ſhall be called,* THE LORD (or JEHOVAH) *our righteouſneſs.* Here it is ſaid, that *Jehovah* is a name peculiar to the ſupreme God; and that as this name is given to the *Son*, therefore the Son is the ſupreme God. To which I anſwer, that there are ſeveral names or expreſſions, which when taken in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, are applicable to the ſupreme Being *only*; and yet, when taken in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, may be applied to other beings alſo. Thus with reſpect to the name *God*. Iſaiah xliv. 6. *I am the firſt, and I am the laſt*; *and beſides me there is no God.* And yet this name is given to others; as in *Exod.* vii. 1. *The Lord ſaid to* Moſes, *ſee I have made thee a God to* Pharoah. Pſalm. lxxxii. 1. *God ſtandeth in the congrega-*

congregation of princes, he is a judge among Gods. verſe 6. *I have ſaid ye are Gods.* Thus again, with reſpect to the term *good*, Matt. xix. 17. *Why calleſt thou me good; there is none good but one, that is God.* And yet the term good is applied to others; as we read in *Acts* xi. 24. That *Barnabas was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghoſt.* Thus again, with reſpect to the term *holy*, Rev. xv. 4. *Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy.* And yet we read, *Levit.* xix. 2. *Ye ſhall be holy, for I, the Lord your God am holy.* Acts x. 22. *Cornelius* was warned from God by an *holy angel.* And therefore, ſuppoſing the term *Jehovah*, in its *firſt* and ſtricteſt ſenſe, be applicable to the ſupreme Being only; yet it will not follow but that it may, in a *ſecondary* and leſs proper ſenſe, be applied to another being alſo, as we find in fact it was; as in *Gen.* xix. 13. *We will deſtroy this place, becauſe the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath ſent us to deſtroy it.* Compared with *verſe* 24. *Then the Lord* (or *Jehovah* the angel) *rained upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *brimſtone and fire, from the Lord* (or *Jehovah* the ſupreme God) *out of heaven.* Again, verſe 27. *And* Abraham *gat up early in the morning to the place where he ſtood before the Lord* (or *Jehovah*) that is, before the angel of the Lord, compared with chap. xviii. 33. *And the Lord* (or *Jehovah*) *went his way as ſoon as he had left communing with* Abraham *and* Abraham *returned unto his place.* So that not any thing can be inferred from the name *Jehovah*, as being applied to Chriſt; ſeeing this name is given, not only to the ſupreme Being, but alſo to his *miniſter*, or *angel*, whom he ſent to commune with *Abraham*, and to execute his vengeance upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah.* If it ſhould be ſaid, that this angel was our Lord Chriſt; then, I ſay, that the point I am pleading for is *yielded up*, *viz.* that the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

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is a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God; becauſe the name and office of an *angel*, which belongs to Chriſt, is not, nor cannot be applicable to the ſupreme God.

Zach. xiii. 7. *Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, againſt the man that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* Here, becauſe Chriſt is called *God's fellow*, therefore it is inferred that he is *equal* to God. In anſwer to which I obſerve, that there were perſons who were called the *Son's fellow's*, and yet the Son muſt be allowed to be the *ſuperiour* to them, becauſe he was anointed with the oil of gladneſs above them, *Pſalm* xlv. And therefore, tho' the perſons beforementioned were, upon ſome account or other called the *Son's fellows*, and tho' the Son, upon ſome account or other, was called *God's fellow*; yet it does by no means imply an *equality* in either caſe.

Matt. ix. 2. 6. *Jeſus ſeeing their faith, ſaith unto the ſick of the palſy, ſon, be of good cheer, thy ſins, be forgiven thee.*——*That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive ſins, he ſaith to the ſick of the palſy, ariſe*, &c. From hence it is urged, that as all ſin is chiefly and primarily committed againſt God, ſo it is God only who can forgive it; ſeeing our Lord did actually forgive ſin, therefore he muſt be *God*, or the *ſupreme God*. In anſwer to which I obſerve, that to *forgive ſin* is to remit or take away that puniſhment and condemnation, that is either inflicted, or threatned to the ſinner, as a juſt puniſhment for his ſin. And as all ſin is chiefly and primilary committed againſt God; ſo the forgiveneſs of ſin is chiefly and primarily in his hand. And farther I obſerve, that this God, or ſupreme God, is *God the Father*; and that when the Son doth forgive ſin, that is, remit the puniſhment due to the ſinner,

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as aforeſaid, it is not by any authority or power which he hath *originally* and *independently in himſelf*; but by virtue of that authority inveſted in him by the Father; as he himſelf declared. *John* v. 22. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* And the Apoſtle ſaith, that Chriſt is *appointed* to be judge both of quick and dead. Acts x. 42. And Chriſt himſelf *prayed* to his Father for *forgiveneſs* for his murderers. *Luke* xxiii. 34. So that Chriſt's forgiving the man's ſins, by taking away the temporary puniſhment he lay under for them, does by no means beſpeak him to be the ſupreme God, or equal to him.

Matt. xxviii. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.* From hence it is inferred, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt are three co-ordinate perſons, or Beings. In anſwer to which I obſerve, that the chriſtian religion is *originally* and *primarily* from God the Father, and that the Son, in revealing this religion, did but reveal the *will* of the *Father*. John vi. 38. *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of him that ſent me.* Chap. xii. 49. 50. *I have not ſpoken of my ſelf, but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a commandment both what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak. Whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.* And the holy Ghoſt, in confirming and bearing witneſs to this religion, did but confirm and bear witneſs to the *Father*'s *will*. This being premiſed, I ſay, that *baptizing* in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, muſt ſignify the *authority* of the baptizer, or the *duty* of the baptized. If the former be the caſe, then tho' authority be derived from *all three*; yet the Father alone is the *original fountain* of that authority. And therefore not any thing can be inferred from hence,

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with reſpect to their equality. And tho' they are joined together in this commiſſion; yet that does no more make them co-ordinate Beings, than St. *Paul*'s joining the *elect angels* with the Father and the Son, does not make thoſe angels co-ordinate with the Father and the Son. 1 Tim. v. 21. *I charge thee, before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the elect angels*, &c. But if the latter be the caſe, *viz.* the duty of the baptized; then I ſay, that it was an *initiating* them into that religion, which was *originally* from the Father, *revealed* by the Son, and *confirmed* by the Holy Ghoſt, and ſo was from them *all*. Thus baptizing into *Moſes*, as in 1 *Cor.* x. 2. was baptizing into that *religion*, that *Moſes* was the *publiſher* of, and into that *covenant* which *Moſes* was the *mediator* of. But this does by no means imply, that they were co-ordinate Beings with the ſupreme God the Father in *either caſe*.

John i. 1, 2, 3. *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God, the ſame was in the beginning with God: All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* In this text, the Son is called the *word*, and *God*, and is ſaid to be in the *beginning* with God, and to *make* all things that were made: and from hence it is inferred, that he himſelf is made of none, and conſequently that he is equal to the Father. In anſwer to which there are ſeveral things to be conſidered, as, *firſt*, what is meant by the term *beginning*; by which I think at moſt no more can be intended, than the beginning of the *Moſaick creation*; becauſe St. *John* not only uſes the ſame phraſe of ſpeech, that *Moſes* begins the hiſtory of the creation with, but alſo ſeems to refer to that creation in the 3d verſe. Beſides, we have no other beginning *antecedent* to the beginning of the *Moſaick* creation, which the ſcripture has given any

account of; and therefore there cannot be any other beginning antecedent to that, which the ſcripture can reaſonably be ſuppoſed to *refer* to. And *eternity*, ſurely, cannot be intended, by an expreſſion which ſtands in direct oppoſition to it. *Secondly*, It is to be conſidered what is intended by the term *word*. With reſpect to which I think not any thing can be inferred from the *term it ſelf*; and as it is here uſed to expreſs a perſon, *viz.* the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and as this perſon is elſewhere proved to be inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father; ſo the term *word* being applied to him here cannot poſſibly prove the contrary. *Thirdly*, He is ſaid to be *with God*. But it will not follow from a perſon's being with God, at the beginning of the *Moſaick* creation, that he is *equal* to the God, whom he is ſaid to be with. *Fourthly*, He is ſaid to be *God*. But to be God, or a *God*, proves nothing in the preſent caſe; ſeeing the *godſhip* of the Son is *derived* from the Father, as I have before ſhewn. *Fifthly* and *laſtly*, It is ſaid that *all things were made by him, and that without him was not any thing made, that was made*. And from hence it is inferred, that if the Son was made, he muſt *make himſelf*, which is an abſurd propoſition. With reſpect to which I obſerve, that if the term *made*, ſignifies a *different* manner of production from the term *begotten*, then the word, or Son, was *not* made, but *begotten*. But if this term do ſignify the *ſame manner* of production, then, I ſay, the Son *was made*, becauſe the ſcriptures ſay that he *was begotten*; and yet he *did not* make himſelf, ſeeing he muſt be *excepted* in that creation, who did make all things then made. This is a way of ſpeaking which in other caſes muſt be allowed to have an *exception*, tho' it be not expreſſed. Thus, when *Abſalom* murthered his brother *Ammon*, 2 Sam. xiii. Tidings

ings came to *David*, that *all* the King's sons were dead. Now if this report had been true, yet *Absalom* must have been excepted, who was the cause and contriver of that murder. Thus, again, *Heb.* ii. 9. *We see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour, that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man.* And yet Christ did not taste death *for himself* tho' he was a man; it being manifest that he is *excepted* who did taste of death for every man. And, thus again, 2 *Cor.* xv. 26, 27. *He* (*viz.* Christ) *must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, for he hath put all things under his feet.* And then the Apostle adds, *when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him.* Thus, I say, with equal reason, that when St. *John* saith, all things were made by him, it is manifest that he is *excepted* in that creation, who made all things that were then made. So that this text affords nothing to the objectors purpose.

John v. 25. *And needed not that he should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.* Here, Christ is said to *know* the *hearts of men*; and from hence it is inferred, that he is equal to the Father. In answer to which it is sufficient to observe, that St. *Peter* knew the hearts of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; and that as God gave him this ability, so he could as easily have given him ability to know the hearts of *all men*: and if he had done so, St. *Peter* would still have been *but a man*, and therefore no just consequence can be drawn from the *extent* of Christ's knowledge, or any other natural power, to prove him equal to the Father.

John iii. 31. *He that cometh from above, is above all.* Acts x. 36. *He is Lord of all.* Rom. ix. 5.

Who is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Here, becauſe Chriſt is ſaid to be Lord of all, and over all, and God above all, and the like; from hence it is inferred, that he is equal to the Father. In anſwer to which I ſay, that this muſt be ſpoken of him *excluſive* of the *Father*. For if the Father is *included* in this *all*, then the Son is *not equal*, but *ſuperiour* to the Father, which is abſurd to ſuppoſe. And therefore as the Father muſt needs be *excepted* out of this *all*, ſo thoſe texts prove nothing.

John v. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* Acts vii. 59. *And they ſtoned* Stephen *calling upon God, and ſaying, Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit.* Phil. ii. 10. *That at the name of Jeſus, every knee ſhould bow.* Heb. i. 6. *Let all the angels of God worſhip him.* Rev. v. from verſe 7. to the end. In which the four beaſts, and the four and twenty elders are ſaid to bow down and to worſhip the Lamb, and to ſing to his praiſe; and every creature is ſaid to join in this ſong of praiſe. In theſe texts Chriſt is not only ſaid to be *worſhipped*, and *prayed* to, but likewiſe honour and worſhip are *required* to be paid to him; and from hence it is inferred, that he is equel to the Father.

In anſwer to which I obſerve, that Chriſt may very *fitly* be prayed to in all thoſe caſes, in which he *hears* our prayers, and has *ability* and a *diſpoſition* to help us; and the admitting that he has ſuch knowledge and power, does not prove him to be the ſupreme God, or equal to him; becauſe the Son's knowledge and power, in this caſe, is derived from the Father, to whom he owes his very being, as I have before ſhewn. If it ſhould be ſaid, that *God only* is the object of prayer; I anſwer, the nature of the thing ſhews the contrary; becauſe what makes an *object of prayer* in any

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caſe, is a perſon's hearing our prayers, and having ability and a diſpoſition to help us: and therefore Chriſt's being prayed to, in thoſe caſes, in which he hears our prayers, and has ability and a diſpoſition to help us, cannot prove him to be equal to the Father. Again,

I farther obſerve that honour and worſhip are the ſame thing, and that it is but juſt we ſhould render to every one the honour or worſhip which is *his due*; and conſequently, that it is but juſt that we ſhould render to *Chriſt*, all that honour or worſhip which is due to his name. But then it will not follow, from our *doing* this, or from our being *required* to do it, that Chriſt is equal with the Father. If it ſhould be ſaid, that *divine worſhip* is payable to the *ſupreme God only*. I anſwer, if divine worſhip conſiſts in worſhiping the ſupreme God, *as the ſupreme God*; then we have no *precept* which requires us to worſhip Chriſt with *divine worſhip*; becauſe we are not required to worſhip him *as the ſupreme God*. Neither have we any *example* of ſuch worſhip being paid to him that we know of. If it ſhould be ſaid that we are required to honour the Son, *even* as we honour the Father, and therefore it muſt be *divine honour*. I anſwer, the text it ſelf ſhews that this cannot be the caſe. For as the *ground* of this honour, which is payable to Chriſt, is his being the Father's *miniſter* and *repreſentative* (*the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*) ſo he muſt of neceſſity be *differently* conſidered in the minds of men, when they pay their reſpect to him, as the miniſter and repreſentative of the ſupreme God, which is the preſent caſe: it being, I think, impoſſible for a man to have the ſame *high conception* of him, whom he conſiders to be the *miniſter* and *repreſentative*.

tative of the ſupreme God, as he has of the *ſupreme God himſelf*; and therefore, no ſuch thing can poſſibly be required from him. If it ſhould be ſaid, that Chriſt is the *very ſupreme God*, and therefore he is to be honoured with *divine honour*. I anſwer, this is not *probable* from the text under conſideration, ſeeing he is not here *conſidered* as the ſupreme God, but only as his *miniſter* and *repreſentative*. And the honour which is here *required*, as payable to him, is not to him under the *conſideration* of his being himſelf the ſupreme God, but only as he is the miniſter and repreſentative of the Father.

John x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* But this text I have already conſidered in my *ſixth argument*, and therefore to that I refer my reader.

2 *Cor.* xii. 14. *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all, Amen.* Here, becauſe the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are joined together in this benediction, therefore it is inferred that they are *three* co-ordinate Beings. To which I anſwer, that the ſame Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* v. 21. requires *Timothy* before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the elect angels, to obſerve what he then gave him in charge; and therefore if St. *Paul*'s joining the Son, and Holy Ghoſt, with the Father, in the forementioned *benediction*, proves the Son, and Holy Ghoſt, to be *co-ordinate* with the Father; then his joining the elect angels with the Father, and the Son, in the forementioned *charge*, proves the elect angels to be *co-ordinate* with the Father and the Son: bnt the conſequence is not juſt in either caſe.

Philip. ii. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, &c. I anſwer,

anſwer, God has no *equal*, and therefore I think that this cannot be the true reading, nor what the Apoſtle intended to expreſs. Beſides, ſome learned men ſay, that the words ſhould be tranſlated thus, *viz. He did not greedily catch, or prey to be equal with God.* And this is perfectly agreeable to the deſign of the Apoſtle, whoſe words may be read thus, *who being in the form of God, by being his miniſter and repreſentative, he did not proudly and vainly aſſume to be equal with God; but on the contrary, he humbled himſelf, by taking upon him the form of a ſervant, and by becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs; wherefore becauſe he thus humbled himſelf, God hath highly exalted him,* &c.

Col. ii. 9. *For in him, dwelleth all the fulneſs of the godhead bodily.* From hence it is inferred, that our Lord Chriſt is co-ordinate with the Father. To which I anſwer, that the Apoſtle, in the preceding chapter, verſe 15. declares Chriſt to be the *image* of the *inviſible God.* And therefore, tho' an image *repreſents* a thing; yet the image cannot poſſibly be *the thing* which is repreſented by it. And as Chriſt is the *image* or *repreſentative* of God, as God has inveſted him with all power or authority in heaven and in earth; ſo the fulneſs of the godhead, or godſhip (that is, all *dominion*) may be ſaid to *dwell* or *reſide* in him: and this, I think, is the moſt that can be inferred from the Apoſtle's words. For ſaith he, verſe 8. *Beware leaſt any man ſpoil you, through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Chriſt.* And then he gives the reaſons why they ſhould not hearken to thoſe falſe teachers, *viz. firſt*, becauſe *in him* who was their king and head, dwelt all the *fulneſs* of the *godhead bodily.* That is, in him, and in him only, it pleaſed the Father, that ſove-

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reign dominion and authority over all ſhould be lodged; and conſequently to him, and to him only, they ought to ſubmit themſelves, and not to hearken to, nor follow any of thoſe falſe teachers, who would impoſe any law upon them, beſides that of Chriſt. *Secondly*, He tells them, that they were *compleat in him.* That is, by their ſubmitting themſelves to his government, they were compleat *chriſtians*, and ſo were compleatly qualified for pardon of ſin, God's favour, and eternal life; and conſequently, it was altogether needleſs for them to be concerned to believe, or practiſe any thing, beſides what the chriſtian religion did require from them. And then the Apoſtle adds, ſaying, *which is the head of all principalities and powers.* From which words it plainly appears, that it was the *ſovereign authority* and power over all, which was given to Chriſt, by the Father, that the Apoſtle is here *referring* to.

1 *John* i. 1. 2. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, and our hands have handled of the word of life: For the life was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it, and bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifeſted unto us.* Here the Son is declared to be an *eternal* Being, and from hence it is inferred, that he is coequal with the Father. To which I anſwer, that the *life* here ſpoken of, may very properly imply not the *perſon*, but that *doctrine* of life and ſalvation which Chriſt publiſhed to the world. And ſuppoſing the *perſon* of Chriſt be here referred to; yet ſeeing he is ſometimes called life, not with reſpect to what *he is in himſelf*, but what *he is to others*; (as in *John* xi. 25. *Jeſus ſaid unto her, I am the reſurrection and the life.*) Therefore he may very fitly be called *eternal life*, not with reſpect to the duration of his own being; but with reſpect to that

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eternal life which he is the *proclaimer* and the *diſpenſer* of to mankind. And if the *duration* of his being ſhould be intended; yet it will not follow, that he is eternal in the *ſtricteſt* ſenſe of that term: becauſe the word *eternal* is ſometimes uſed in a more *limitted* and *reſtrained* ſenſe (as the cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, are ſaid to ſuffer the vengeance of *eternal fire* Jude 7.) And therefore, ſeeing the Son was begotten or derived from the Father, it will follow, that he cannot be eternal, in the *ſtricteſt* and moſt *abſolute ſenſe* of that word.

1 *John* v. 7. *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one.* Here the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, are ſaid to be one; and from hence it is inferred, that they are three co-ordinate Beings.

In anſwer to which I obſerve, that the Apoſtle is here ſhewing, what *evidences* attended the chriſtian religion for its confirmation. And he ſeems to allude to that law of the *Jews* (*Deut.* xvii. 16. and *John* viii. 17.) which did oblige them to receive that for *truth*, which was atteſted by *two* or *three witneſſes*. And therefore the chriſtian religion ought not to be *rejected*, becauſe its authority was ſupported, not barely by the teſtimony of *one* but by the teſtimony of *three* witneſſes. Thus, verſe 6. *It is the ſpirit that beareth witneſs, becauſe the ſpirit is truth.* Verſe 7. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three are one.* Which is as much as if St. *John* had ſaid, the ſpirit is not the *only* evidence in the preſent caſe; for there are *three* that bear record, *viz.* the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; and theſe all *join* in their evidence, and are *one* in teſtifying to the *ſame truth*. And tho' theſe are joined together in their evidence, yet that cannot make

them

them co-ordinate Beings; becauſe *three* Beings, who are *inferiour* one to another, may *join* in teſtifying to the ſame thing; and three co-ordinate Beings may bear a different teſtimony to one another, and the truth remain unconfirmed. And whereas it is ſaid, theſe *three* are *one*; this muſt ſignify unity in *teſtimony*, becauſe unity in any other ſenſe, does not ſerve the *Apoſtle's purpoſe*. If they were *one agent*, or being, then there would be but *one witneſs*, whereas St. *John* declares there are *three*. And if they were of *one ſpecies*, or *kind* of eſſence, yet *three* ſuch witneſſes might *diſagree* in their evidence, and the truth might remain unconfirmed. So that the *three* here referred to, muſt be *three diſtinct agents*, or witneſſes; and they muſt *agree* or be *one* in their evidence, to render it *pertinent* to the Apoſtle's deſign: and this they might be, and yet not be *three* co-ordinate Beings.

1 *John* v. 10. *This is the true God, and eternal life.* The Son is here ſuppoſed to be called the *true God*: and from hence it is inferred, that he is equal to the Father. I anſwer, ſuppoſing theſe words are to be applied to Chriſt (tho' it may be as proper to apply them to the Father) yet when they are thus applied, they cannot ſignify the ſame, as thoſe other words, *viz.* the *only true God*; becauſe Chriſt makes thoſe laſt mentioned words to be applicable to the *Father only*. John xvii. 3. *This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Seeing then, that the Father, conſidered in a ſeparate and diſtinct capacity from the Son, is here declared to be the *only* or the *alone true God*; this cannot be ſaid of the *Son*, in the *ſame ſenſe* as it is ſaid of the Father. For if the Son is ſo, in the ſame ſenſe as the Father is, then there are *two*, in the ſame ſenſe, of whom it is ſaid that there is

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but one, which is a contradiction. And therefore, I conceive, if thoſe words were applied by St. *John* to *Chriſt*, then he called him the *true God*, in oppoſition to thoſe *falſe Chriſts* which had appeared in the world. This is the true God, or the true Meſſiah, or Chriſt (which comes to the ſame) and in him alone ye may have eternal life.

Rev. i, 11. 17. *I am* Alpha *and* Omega, the *firſt and the laſt.*———*I am the firſt and the laſt.* From theſe and the like expreſſions in this book, it is inferred, that the Son is co-eternal to, and co-equal with the Father. To which I anſwer, that Chriſt's being the *firſt* and the *laſt* muſt be underſtood *excluſive* of the *Father*; for otherwiſe the Son would be *before* the Father, and all things would end *ultimately* in the glory of the Son: whereas the contrary is moſt expreſsly declared in ſcripture, in which Chriſt is ſaid to be the only begotten Son of God; as in *John* iii. 16. and all things are ſaid to end ultimately in the glory of the Father. 1 *Cor.* xv. 24. 28. *Then cometh the end, when he ſhall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him, that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* Philip. ii. 11. *That every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* So that all things, even the glory which is given and aſcribed to Chriſt, are to end ultimately in the glory of God the Father. And conſequently, the Father is the *laſt end* of all things. Seeing then that the Father was *before* the Son, and that all things end *ultimately* in the glory of the Father (as the above ſcriptures witneſs) and ſeeing Chriſt's being the *firſt* and the *laſt* muſt be underſtood not incluſive, but *excluſive* of the Father, it will follow, that the Son is a Being inferiour

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and ſubordinate to the Father, and that the Father alone is the ſupreme God.

Thus I have conſidered ſome of the *principal texts* which are urged in the preſent caſe; and have ſhewn that not any thing can *fairly* be concluded from them, in prejudice of the arguments before laid down. I will conclude this diſcourſe, with recommending to all chriſtians the practice of *forbearance* and *brotherly love*, under their different apprehenſions with reſpect to this, and every other point: ſuch behaviour being what the chriſtian *religion* requires, and calls for from us, and is what is highly *ornamental* to it. For as the treating *ill* the perſons, or characters of others, is a very improper way of recommending truth to thoſe perſons; ſo ſuch a *behaviour* is very improper to recommend any perſon to the love and favour of God. God is love. And as his giving *revelation* to mankind was the effect and produce of that love; ſo it was kindly intended to excite and promote in us that *divine principle*, and not to be a *bar* to it. And therefore, when the chriſtian revelation ſtirs us up to *love* and *good works*, and engages us to ſet forward the preſent and future happineſs of the reſt of our fellow-creatures, then its great end is anſwered upon us, God is honoured, and we are rendered pleaſing and acceptable to him. But when the chriſtian revelation becomes an *occaſion* of wrath and reſentment to us, and we are ſtirred up by it to *hurt* and *injure* our fellow-creatures, then its great end is manifeſtly perverted, God is diſhonoured, and we are rendered the more vile and diſpleaſing in his ſight.

TRACT II.

THE

Supremacy of the FATHER VINDICATED:

OR,

Obſervations on Mr. *Claggett*'s book, entitled, *Arianiſm anatomized*. Wherein is ſhewn, that what Mr. *Claggett*, and others, call Chriſt's *divine nature*, is ſo far from being the real and very *Son* of *God*, that on the contrary, it is the *very Father* of God's Son.

FIRST, I obſerve, that as Mr. *Claggett* has undertaken to *confute* my arguments, ſo he hath proſecuted this deſign, in a very *unbecoming*, and *unchriſtian* manner; by repreſenting me, as the *vileſt* of creatures, and by laying an heavy charge upon me, which he can by no means prove, *viz.* he repreſents me as one, who, by *holy* and *pious pretences*, would not only introduce real *popery*; but would make us (by which I ſuppoſe he means proteſtants) ten times more *antichriſtian*, than the worſt of papiſts themſelves. One, who by *hypocritical* flatteries endeavours to *beguile* unwary readers, into a good opinion of (what he is pleaſed to call) *hereſy*. Theſe, with many other *heinous crimes*, he is pleaſed to lay to my charge. But as he is wholly unable to *prove* what he ſo freely accuſes me of, and therefore muſt be guilty of *ſlander* and *falſe accuſation*, whether I am guilty or not: ſo that God, who knows all things, knows that I am *innocent* in this

this matter. Moreover, he is not content to lay this burden of reproach upon me alone, but he brings in ſome body elſe, no body knows who, *one behind the curtain*, to feel the weight of his heavy hand; but I aſſure him, there is no body behind the curtain; and therefore if *my book* is ſo bad, as he repreſents it to be, I think, I ought in juſtice, to let the *ſhame* reſt only where it is due. He inſinuates of me, as in his title page, that I take a liberty to *ſpeak wickedly for God*. Whether I am guilty or not, I will leave to be determined by the righteous Judge of all the earth. And as I know it is a thing impoſſible for him to prove; ſo it may be proper for him to conſider, whether in *this particular*, he is not guilty himſelf in many inſtances. Thus for example, in page 14. he repreſents me as affirming Chriſt's divine nature to be a *created* nature: which is a *direct falſhood*; becauſe I never made ſuch an affirmation; and I appeal to my book in the caſe; and I challenge Mr. *Claggett* to ſhew any ſuch affirmation in it. If it ſhould be replied in his behalf, that it may be *inferred* from what I have ſaid. I anſwer, I have declared that Jeſus Chriſt is the *only begotten Son* of God; and therefore ſuch inference cannot be juſt, except *begetting* and *creating* are one and the ſame thing; and if they are, then this charge will fall equally as heavy upon the *ſcriptures*, as upon me; becauſe he is there declared to be the only begotten Son of God. I anſwer farther, ſuppoſing ſuch an inference to be juſt, yet that makes no alteration in the caſe; becauſe as *affirmations* and *inferences* are two things, ſo I cannot, with any colour of *truth*, be ſaid to affirm that which in fact is no more than the inference of another man. Suppoſe Mr. *Claggett* ſhould affirm, that God hath fore-ordained every thing which cometh to paſs; and if I ſhould infer from hence,

hence, that God is or was the *author* of *ſin*, upon this principle, and tho' my inference would be juſt; yet I could not, with any colour of juſtice or honeſty, in this caſe, ſay, that Mr. *Claggett* affirmed God is or was the author of ſin, becauſe he made no ſuch affirmation. And though, by *baſe inſinuations*, *falſhood*, and *ſlander*, he hath given occaſion for the raiſing of mens *anger* againſt me; yet I ſhall purſue him with no other revenge, than barely to remind him of his *faults*, and deſire God to give him *repentance*, and a *better mind*. Whether he will reflect upon, and repent of all that groundleſs cenſure, and uncharitableneſs, which he hath ſhewed himſelf to be guilty of, I know not; but this I know, that it is a matter of the greateſt concern to him. And if he ſhould be under a ſtrong perſuaſion, that he is of the number of *God's elect*, and that God *ſees not ſin* in his people, and ſo ſhould think himſelf ſecure from danger, how contrary ſoever he acts to the goſpel rule; yet, I fear, ſuch a perſuaſion will be but a weak ſecurity at the day of judgment. Again,

I obſerve, that as I have aſſerted, and undertaken to prove, by eight ſcripture-arguments, that *the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is a Being inferiour and ſubordinate to his God and Father; and that the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is only, and alone, the ſupreme God*; ſo by the term *ſon*, in this aſſertion, I meant only that *Being* which the ſcriptures call the Son, and the only begotten Son of God, and which Being himſelf calls God *his Father*: I ſay, I meant this *perſon* or *Being*, and him only, and not any thing elſe that men may be pleaſed to call the Son, which in reality, and in fact, is not ſo. I farther obſerve, that as Mr. *Claggett* undertook to *confute* my *arguments*; ſo he hath been pleaſed to ſubſtitute

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an *imaginary Son*, in the room and place of that *true* and *real Son of God*, which my arguments relate to. I call that Son of God, with which he oppoſeth me, an imaginary Son, becauſe in fact it is no other. Now that I may truly ſtate the caſe, I obſerve Mr. *Clagett* diſtingniſhes the Son or God into two natures, *viz.* his human, and his divine nature; and I ſuppoſe, that under theſe two terms, he comprehends all that he calls *the Son of God.* By the human nature, I apprehend, he means that man of whom St. *Peter* ſpeaks, *Acts* ii. 22. *Ye men of* Iſrael, *hear theſe words, Jeſus of* Nazareth, *a man approved of God among you, by miracles, wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of you, as you your ſelves alſo know.* And of whom St. *Paul* ſaith, in *Acts* xvii. 31. *He (viz. God) hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained.* Now, that this human nature, this man, is the only begotton Son of God, I verily believe; and ſo in this point, I ſuppoſe, Mr. *Claggett* and I are agreed. And if I can prove, that what he calls the divine nature is ſo far from being, in fact, the Son of God, that on the contrary it is the Father of God's Son, then it will follow, by an unavoidable conſequence, that the Son of God, which he pleades for, is but an imaginary Son; and that what he calls the human nature, is the true, and whole, and all that is the Son of God. I ſhall not take notice of all the definitions which he hath given of this Son, but only of that which is moſt plain and eaſy to be underſtood. He ſaith, that the Son is the ſubſtantial wiſdom of the Father; and that Chriſt is the power of God, and the wiſdom of God eſſentially, by the Father's communicating his eſſence to the Son, and that God hath not qualities, every thing in God is his eſſence, *&c. page* 14. Here I obſerve, power and wiſdom, as they

they are attributes (or properties, or perfections, or whatever names they are called by) which take place in God without meaſure; ſo they may be conſidered in three reſpects; *firſt*, with reſpect to themſelves, as they are eſſential properties in him; *ſecondly*, with reſpect to their uſe and exerciſe; and *thirdly*, with reſpect to the effects and produce of them. And,

Firſt, With reſpect to power and wiſdom, as they are eſſential properties in God. Now as power and wiſdom always ſuppoſes a ſubject which they take place in; ſo, if we conſider them ſeparate from that ſubject, they are not; becauſe there is no ſuch thing in nature, as power and wiſdom, conſider'd ſeparate from any ſubject; and conſequently the power and wiſdom of God, conſider'd ſeparate from the ſubject which they take place in, cannot conſtitute a ſon; becauſe in reality they are not, when conſider'd ſeparate, as aforeſaid. And if we conſider wiſdom and power as eſſential properties in God, and conſider them as they are in him, then they are in no reſpect the Son of God: nay, they are ſo far from it, that on the contrary, they are the Father of God's Son. Whatever is eſſential to, and conſtitutes that Being which we call *the Father*, that properly ſpeaking is the Father; for though the term *Father* is a relative term, which in its moſt proper ſenſe is expreſſive, not of the nature, but the relation of him to whom we apply that term; and though the act, by which a child or ſon is begotten or produced is eſſential to, and is that which conſtitutes the fatherhood in this caſe; yet that act is not the father, but only the act of the father, or rather the act of that being who becomes or is conſtituted a father by that act, and whoſe fatherhood or fatherly relation is founded in it, and flows from it: and therefore whatever is eſſential to, and conſtitutes that being which

we call the *father*, that, properly ſpeaking, is the father. And foraſmuch as the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of God, or the Father, are eſſential to, and in part conſtitute that Being which we call God, or the Father; therefore that ſubſtantial power and wiſdom are the very Father, tho' they are not the whole or all that is the Father. And with reſpect to theſe, there is no room to diſpute, whether they are begotten by a neceſſity of nature, or by a freedom of will; becauſe they are not begotten at all. God is neceſſarily a wiſe and powerful Being, and his wiſdom and power take place in him, antecedent to all cauſes, and conſequently are never begotten; and therefore to ſay, that God or the Father begets this Son, (*viz.* his eſſential power and wiſdom, which in fact are himſelf) by a neceſſity of nature; and to ſay, that he begets theſe by a permanent act, is a contradiction; becauſe, as there is no act exerciſed in this caſe, ſo it is the ſame as to ſay, that God, or the Father, begat or gave Being to himſelf. Beſides the relation of Father and Son neceſſarily ſuppoſes two diſtinct individual Beings, the one begetting or producing the other. Take away this, and the relation is not, it being impoſſible in nature that the ſame individual being ſhould be both father and ſon to himſelf; that he ſhould beget himſelf, and be begotten of himſelf; that he ſhould be the cauſe and the effect to himſelf; and therefore, to make the ſame individual being, to be both father and ſon to himſelf, is to introduce the utmoſt confuſion, by ſuppoſing the relations of father and ſon to take place, where in reality, and in fact, they do not. And conſequently, the eſſential power and wiſdom of God, conſider'd as they are in him, cannot be the Son of God, upon any account, or in any ſenſe whatever. That St. *Paul* affirms Chriſt to be the

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power and wiſdom of God, as in 1 *Cor.* i. 24. I readily grant; and that he is ſo in the ſenſe of which St. *Paul* affirms it of him, I verily believe, *viz.* the wiſdom and power of God was abundantly manifeſted in and by him, in the work of man's ſalvation; and in this ſenſe Jeſus Chriſt may well be ſaid, to be *the power of God*, and *the wiſdom of God*; but that the anointed Saviour, or Son of God, is the very and ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of God, as they are eſſential properties in him, this I deny, upon the grounds before mentioned.

Secondly, The power and wiſdom of God may be conſider'd with reſpect to their uſe and exerciſe. Now tho' wiſdom and power are neceſſarily in him, yet he is entirely free in the uſe and exerciſe of theſe; ſo that he exerciſes them, when, where, and howſoever he pleaſes. Thus, he exerciſed his power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, in the creation of this world. And as he created it when he did; ſo he might have done it ſooner, or not have done it to this day, if he had pleas'd; which abundantly proves, that the exerciſe of theſe depends wholly upon God's good pleaſure. And if we ſhould be ſo weak, as to call the exerciſe of theſe, by the name of the Son of God; yet this Son would be the product of freedom and choice, which Mr. *Claggett* will not allow the Son of God to be. And as God is pleaſed to manifeſt, or ſhew forth his glory, in the exerciſe of theſe; ſo his Son Chriſt is ſaid to be, *the brightneſs of his glory*; becauſe the wiſdom, goodneſs, love, and mercy of God, (his darling attributes) were exerciſed in the work of man's ſalvation in and through him, in a more plentiful and full manner than had ever been exerciſed towards the ſons of men; and ſo he might well be ſaid, to be *the brightneſs of his Father's glory*.

Thirdly, The power and wiſdom of God may be conſider'd with reſpect to the effects and produce of them. Now as the exerciſe of God's power and wiſdom is from freedom and choice, and depends wholly upon his good pleaſure, ſo it will follow, that whatever is produced by them muſt be ſo; and conſequently, if God hath, or ſhall beget, create, make, or any other way produce, a Son, or Sons, in the uſe and exerciſe of his eſſential power and wiſdom, ſuch a Son, or Sons, would be begotten, created, made, (or whatever way they are produced) not from a neceſſity of nature, but wholly and ſolely from the freedom of his will; and ſo ſuch a Son of God would not be the Son of God, which Mr. *Claggett* hath been pleading for. And if we ſhould make all the effects and produce of God's eſſential power and wiſdom to be the Son of God, then it will follow, that as this is a contingent Son, ſo he is conſtituted or compounded of this ball of earth on which we tread, with all its inhabitants, and all the reſt of God's works; but this is ſo monſtrous as no man in his ſenſes will be ſuppoſed to own.

Thus I have conſider'd the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of God, both with reſpect to themſelves, as they are eſſential properties in him, and with reſpect to the uſe and exerciſe of theſe, and alſo with reſpect to the effects and produce of them; and have ſhewed, that they neither do, nor can afford any ſuch Son of God as Mr. *Claggett* contends for; and conſequently, ſuch a ſon is but an imaginary ſon, and not the true and real Son of God, which the ſcriptures give us an account of. It is ſuch a ſon as hath no foundation in the nature of things, nor in the chriſtian revelation. I have no need to take notice of the parallel he draws betwixt the ſun, with its light, and the father, with this imaginary ſon; which, upon examination, I find to be as little to his

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purpoſe as the reſt. I ſay, there is no need for me to take notice of theſe, ſeeing he hath plainly ſhewn, that the Son, which he is arguing for, is the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father; and conſequently, is not a ſon in reality, or in fact, but only in imagination. Nay, that he is ſo far from being the real and very Son of the Father, that on the contrary he is the Father of God's Son. And as he hath ſubſtituted an imaginary ſon, ſo he hath excluded the real and true Son of God out of the queſtion; whereas my arguments relate wholly to the real Son of God, and not to that imaginary ſon which he hath ſubſtituted in his ſtead. By the real Son I mean, that divine Perſon (that man, conſiſting of ſoul and body, which Mr. *Claggett* calls the human nature) which was propheſied of, and promiſed to the *Jews* as their Meſſiah; which was born of the Virgin, and was baptized of *John* in *Jordan*; and upon whom the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in a bodily ſhape, and reſted upon him, and ſo he was anointed to his office with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power; and to whom God bare witneſs by an audible voice from heaven, *ſaying*, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*; that man which preached the goſpel of peace, which ſuffered death upon the croſs, which was raiſed from the dead, and aſcended into heaven, and is exalted at the right-hand of God, whom the heavens muſt retain till the reſtitution of all things; that man whom God hath made both Lord and Chriſt, as in *Acts* ii. 36. I ſay, this heavenly Perſon, this man, is the true and only begotten Son of God, and him alone. And I challenge Mr. *Claggett* to prove, from ſcripture, any other only begotten Son of God, but he. This is the Son of God which my arguments relate to. Now if he hath proved this Son to be equal to the Fa-

ther, and to be the ſupreme God, then I acknowledge my arguments confuted. But, alas, he is ſo far from doing this, that on the contrary he owns this real Son to be inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father; and ſo allows all that I have aſſerted. It is this real Son of God whom I affirm to be the true Chriſt; and if in ſo doing I have ſet up a falſe chriſt, or preached another goſpel, as Mr. *Glaggett* repreſents me to have done, then let him go on with his anathemas. It is this real Son of God, who in the days of his fleſh was *Emanuel, or God with us*, as in *Matt.* i. 22, 23. It is this Son of God who was the principal ſubject of, and the ſubſtance of the promiſes which God had made to mankind; and ſo he was *Jehovah* our righteouſneſs. When God was going to fulfil his covenant and promiſe which he had made to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, by bringing the children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* into the good land of *Canaan*, he tells them, as in *Exod.* vi. 3. that by the name *Jehovah* he had not been known to them; but now they ſhould know that he is to them *Jehovah* their God, that is, a God keeping or fulfilling his covenant and promiſe with them, as in verſes 7, 8. So when he fulfilled his great covenant-promiſe, in ſending the Meſſiah, this Perſon was to be called, *Jehovah our righteouſneſs*, as in *Jer.* xxiii. 6. that is the fulfilling of God's covenant for our righteouſneſs or juſtification; not that this ~~Perſon~~ was properly *Jehovah*, or the covenant-keeper, but he was called *Jehovah*, as the covenant was fulfilled in him, the name being transferred from him that had made and kept this covenant, to him that was the ſubject or thing promiſed. That names are thus tranſferred from one perſon to another, in the ſcriptures, ſee *Pſalm* xxiv. 6. *This is the generation of them that ſeek him, that ſeek thy face* [O Jacob] here

here the name [*Jacob*] is transferred to the [God of *Jacob*] It is this Son, or Lamb of God, who is ſet down with his Father in his throne, to whom the Saints return their thankful acknowledgment, for that he hath redeemed them to God, by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, as in *Rev.* iii. 21, and 5, 9.

If it ſhould be here replied (from another quarter) that tho' the man Chriſt Jeſus is the only begotten Son of God; and tho' his Perſon is called by that name in the ſcriptures, upon the account of, and only with reſpect to, his human nature; yet the man Chriſt Jeſus is not all, or that whole Perſon, which is called the only begotten Son of God; becauſe that Perſon, which is ſo called, is conſtituted of the *Logos* or Word (which in fact is the very or ſupreme God) and the man Chriſt Jeſus (which in fact is the only begotten Son of God) both being united in, and ſo conſtituting one and the ſame Perſon, *viz.* the Perſon of the Meſſiah, according to the teſtimony of St. *John*, as in *John* i. 14. *And the word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us*, &c.

I anſwer, *firſt*, I have already obſerv'd, that whatever is eſſential to, and conſtitutes that Being which we call *God*, or the *Father*, that in reality is the very Father; and therefore, if the *Logos* or Word is in fact eſſential to, and (either in whole or in part) conſtitutes that Being which is the very or ſupreme God, then the *Logos* or Word is (in whole or in part) in reality, and in fact, the very Father of God's Son; becauſe he is eſſential to, and in part conſtitutes that Being which is ſo. For whatever union there may be betwixt the ſupreme God and the man Chriſt Jeſus (which is his only begotten Son) yet that union cannot be perſonal, ſo as that theſe two being united conſtitute

ſtitute one and the ſame individual Perſon; becauſe ſuch perſonal union effectually deſtroys the relation of father and ſon, it being a direct contradiction to ſuppoſe one and the ſame individual perſon to be both father and ſon to himſelf. The relation of father and ſon neceſſarily ſuppoſes two diſtinct individual beings (as I have already obſerved) and the ſcriptures, when they ſpeak of God and his Son, they repreſent them as ſuch. Now if the very or ſupreme God, and the man Chriſt Jeſus (which is his Son) are two diſtinct individual Beings (as in the nature and reaſon of the thing they muſt, and as the ſcriptures repreſent them to be) then they are truly two diſtinct individual Perſons, in the moſt proper ſenſe of the word Perſon, whatever union there may be betwixt them; and therefore if the *Logos*, or Word, is the very or ſupreme God, then he cannot be (in whole, nor in part) that Being or Perſon which is the Son of God; and conſequently, whatever union there is betwixt the ſupreme God, and the man Chriſt Jeſus (which is his Son) yet there is not, nor can there be any ſuch perſonal union as is here ſuppoſed.

If it ſhould be farther urged, that tho' the [Word] is the very or ſupreme God; yet he is not the whole and all that Being which is that God; becauſe that Being is truly diſtinguiſhable into three diſtinct individual Perſons, *viz.* the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; theſe three alike partaking of all the attributes and eſſential properties of the very or ſupreme God; and that the man Chriſt Jeſus, or the Son of God, was not united to that whole Being which is his Father, but only to the ſecond Perſon of that Being, *viz.* the Word; and that this ſecond Perſon, and the man Chriſt Jeſus, conſtitute one individual Perſon in their united ſtate.

I anſwer, as before, if the [Word] is eſſential to, and in part conſtitutes that Being which is the Father of God's Son, then the Word himſelf is the very, tho' not the whole or all that is the Father of that Son; and if the Son was perſonally united to the Word, then he was perſonally united to that Being which is his Father. The diſtinguiſhing of God into three imaginary Perſons makes no alteration in the caſe, becauſe it is that Being which is conſtituted of theſe three, which is the very Father; and therefore what thing ſoever is united to either of theſe Perſons, that thing is united to the Being itſelf; and conſequently, if the man Chriſt Jeſus, which is the Son of God, is perſonally united to the Word, then he is perſonally united to his own Father; and ſo the relation of father and ſon ceaſes, or rather it never took place; becauſe this ſuppoſed perſonal union began when the man Chriſt Jeſus (conſidered as the man Chriſt Jeſus, or Son of God) began to be. But the ſcriptures have plainly declared, that the ſupreme God, and the man Chriſt Jeſus, ſtand in the relation of Father and Son to each other; and conſequently, have plainly denied the perſonal union which is here ſuppoſed. But farther, upon the ſuppoſition that the Being which we call the ſupreme God, is truly diſtinguiſhable into three diſtinct individual Perſons, which alike partake of all the attributes and eſſential properties of that Being, then it will follow, that if the [Word] was perſonally united to the man Chriſt Jeſus, the Father and the Holy Ghoſt muſt be ſo, they being alike omnipreſent, filling up the ſame place, at the ſame time, and being preſent in, and with all perſons and things, in the ſame manner, kind, and degree. And tho' in a triangle, one angle may touch, and ſo be united to what the other two are not, each

angle

angle being in a particular place, and neither of them being in the ſame place as the others; yet with reſpect to three ſuppoſed Perſons, who are alike omnipreſent, the caſe is quite otherways, becauſe they all fill up the ſame place, and where one is, there the others are in the ſame manner, kind, and degree; and therefore to what one is perſonally united, the others muſt be alſo. If the [Word] was perſonally united to the man Chriſt Jeſus, the Father and the Holy Ghoſt muſt be ſo; and conſequently, the man Chriſt Jeſus was perſonally united to the whole, and all of that Being, which we call the ſupreme God. Upon this principle

I farther obſerve, that as God is omnipreſent, and ſo fills all place, and is preſent in and with all perſons and things, in the ſame manner, kind, and degree; ſo from hence it will follow, that if he was perſonally united to the man Chriſt Jeſus, he muſt be ſo to all other men, becauſe he is preſent in and with (and conſequently is united to all other men) in the ſame manner, kind, and degree, as he is to the man Chriſt Jeſus; for tho' God may, if he pleaſes, exerciſe or manifeſt his attributes or eſſential properties at ſome times, and in ſome places, when he doth not at other times, or in other places; and tho' he may exerciſe or manifeſt theſe in, to, by, or upon ſome perſons or things, and not in, to, by, or upon others: I ſay, tho' he may do this if he pleaſes, yet as to his eſſence, or eſſential properties themſelves, they are not ſubject to theſe changes or alterations, they being alike preſent in and with, and ſo are alike united to all places, perſons, and things in the ſame manner, kind, and degree. And if God's exerciſing or manifeſting of his attributes, or eſſential properties in, to, by, or upon any being, ſhould be called his perſonal

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union with that being, then it will follow, *firſt*, that every being which God exerciſes or manifeſts his attributes and eſſential properties in, to, by, or upon, I ſay, every ſuch being is perſonally united to the ſupreme God, upon this principle (only it may be with this difference, that one is perſonally united in a different manner, or to a different degree from another, as God's attributes or eſſential properties, are in a different manner or degree exerciſed or manifeſted as aforeſaid) *ſecondly*, it will follow, that * quieſcence or the non-exerciſe or manifeſtation of God's attributes, or eſſential properties in, to, by, or upon any being, deſtroys God's perſonal union with that being, or at leaſt falls ſhort of it; for if perſonal union is founded in God's exerciſing, or manifeſting his attributes, or eſſential properties, as aforeſaid, then it will follow, that quieſcence or the non-exerciſe, or manifeſtation of theſe falls ſhort of that union; ſo that where the exerciſe, or manifeſtation of theſe is wanting to any being (as in the caſe of quieſcence it is,) there perſonal union is wanting to that being; and conſequently when the [word] was quieſcent in the man Chriſt Jeſus, he was not perſonally united to him.

Again, I obſerve, upon a ſuppoſition, that the ſupreme God is truly diſtinguiſhed into three diſtinct individual perſons, and that theſe are not three minds, but only one ſingle individual mind; then it will follow from hence, that if one of theſe perſons acts, the other two muſt act alſo; and if one of theſe is quieſcent, the other two muſt be ſo: for as theſe three conſtitute one and the ſame individual mind, and as this mind is the fountain of action; ſo whatever

* The quieſcence of the word was treated of in a diſcourſe on the Trinity, by Dr. *Bennet*.

actions

actions flow from it, muſt flow from all the three perſons which conſtitute this mind, it being repugnant to reaſon (and no where ſuppoſed in the chriſtian revelation) that one and the ſame mind, or fountain of action, ſhould both act and be quieſcent at the ſame time; this being as much a contradiction as for a thing to be and not to be at the ſame time: and conſequently, if the Father, or the Holy Ghoſt, did at any time act in, by, or upon the man Chriſt Jeſus, then the word, or ſecond perſon, did ſo alſo. And if the word was quieſcent in the man Chriſt Jeſus, then the Father and the Holy Ghoſt muſt be ſo; becauſe they all conſtitute one and the ſame mind or fountain of action. And if we ſuppoſe theſe three perſons to be three diſtinct fountains of action, in one and the ſame mind which may act ſeparate from, and independent one of another, then theſe three perſons are plainly three minds; and ſo we have three minds, and yet but one mind in one and the ſame individual being, which is a contradiction, and a confounding the uſe and ſenſe of words. If theſe three perſons were not the mind itſelf, but only three inſtruments, which he made uſe of to act by, then I allow, that one of theſe perſons might be quieſcent when the others were not; becauſe this mind might make uſe of one inſtrument when he did not make uſe of another; and ſo one might be quieſcent when the others were not ſo; but forasmuch as theſe perſons are not the inſtruments of, but are the very mind itſelf, it will follow, that when one of theſe acts, the others muſt act alſo; and when one of theſe is quieſcent, the other muſt be ſo; becauſe they all conſtitute that one and the ſame mind, or fountain of action, which doth or is ſo.

If it ſhould be ſaid, that theſe are great myſteries, which it is the glory of a chriſtian to ſubject

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his reaſon and underſtanding to; I anſwer, *firſt*, as theſe myſteries are no part of the chriſtian religion, ſo it is ſo far from being a glory, that on the contrary, it is a ſhame for a chriſtian to ſubject his reaſon and underſtanding to ſuch abſurdities and contradictions as are no where revealed in, nor countenanced by the chriſtian revelation. Here it may not be amiſs to obſerve the ſtrange humour of chriſtians, in this particular. They will needs have it, that the ſupreme God is conſtituted of three diſtinct individual perſons, and that the Meſſiah is conſtituted of the ſupreme God, and the man Chriſt Jeſus, and yet is but one individual perſon. In the former we have three perſons in one individual Being; and in the latter we have two intelligent Beings in one individual perſon. In the former the ſupreme God alone conſtitutes three perſons; and in the latter the ſupreme God, and the man Chriſt Jeſus, conſtitute but one perſon. This I call *the humour of chriſtians*; for bleſſed be God, there can be no ſuch thing juſtly chargeable upon the chriſtian revelation. That revelation gives a rational account of the ſupreme God, as one individual Being or perſon, and of his Son Chriſt Jeſus, as another individual Being or Perſon; and it no where contradicts this, when it is underſtood in the moſt likely and rational ſenſe; and therefore, I anſwer, *ſecondly*, it plainly appears to me, from St. *John*'s goſpel, that he uſes the term [word] only as a name to expreſs the perſon of the Meſſiah. We find this perſon was call'd by different names, upon different accounts. He was called *Jeſus* becauſe he was to ſave his people from their ſins. He was called *Chriſt*, becauſe he was anointed and ſet apart by his Father, to the office and work he undertook. He was called *the Son of man*, becauſe he was one of mankind; and becauſe he was in part produced from one of

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that ſpecies. He was called *God*, becauſe he was by his Father made the governour and head of his people. He was called *Son of God*, becauſe he (his body at leaſt) was begotten by the power of the higheſt, in the womb of the Virgin. He was called the *Lamb of God*, becauſe he was to be offered up for a ſin-offering to God; and becauſe of his lamb-like diſpoſition under his ſufferings (*He was led as a lamb to the ſlaughter; and as a ſheep before the ſhearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth.*) He was called *light*, becauſe he was to enlighten mankind with ſaving knowledge. He was called *the way*, *the truth*, *and the life*, becauſe it was he that ſhewed the true way to the favour of God, and eternal life in him. He was called the *logos*, or word, becauſe he was the great revealer of the word or counſel of his Father to mankind. As a man's mind is expreſs'd or ſhewn to others by his words, ſo the mind of God was expreſs'd or ſhewn to mankind by Chriſt; and therefore he, by a figure, is called *the word*, by St. *John*. And whereas it is ſaid, *the word was made fleſh*, &c. I obſerve that the term [word] implies an intelligent rational being, or elſe it implies ſomething which is not an intelligent rational being, when it is uſed by the *Evangeliſt*, as aforeſaid. If it implies ſomething which is not an intelligent rational being, then I ſay, as we know not what the [word] is upon this principle, ſo it is needleſs to enquire any farther about it. But if the term [word] implies an intelligent rational being, when uſed by the *Evangeliſt*, in the text under conſideration, then I obſerve farther, that the text muſt, as I conceive, ſignify one or other of theſe four things; either, *firſt*, *the word was made fleſh*, that is, was tranſubſtantiated, or changed into fleſh; or, *ſecondly*, *the word was made fleſh*, that is, was united unto a whole man, body, and ſoul, the term *fleſh* being put for

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the term *man*; or. *thirdly*, *the word was made fleſh*, that is, was united to a human body or fleſhly part, and ſo became a human ſoul to that body, which he was united to; or, *laſtly*, *the word was made fleſh*, that is, was a man, the term *fleſh*, being put for the term *man*, as before, in the ſecond caſe. One or other of theſe, I think, muſt be St *John*'s meaning in the text: but which of them is the true ſenſe, as it remains a queſtion; ſo, I think, every man ought to eſteem that to be the true ſenſe which appears moſt rational and likely to be ſo, when compared with the reſt of divine revelation. And foraſmuch as we are all fallible, and poſſibly may err, this ought to make us modeſt, with reſpect to our own determinations, and charitable, with reſpect to the determinations of other men.

As to the firſt ſenſe which I have given of the forementioned text, *viz. the word was made, or tranſubſtantiated into fleſh*, as this ſuppoſes the preexiſtence of the word before his change; ſo he muſt be metamorphoſed, or changed into a human body; and conſequently, was no more after that change, than barely the human body of our Saviour; but this ſeems ſo very unlikely to me, that I can by no means think it to be the true ſenſe of the text, tho' it is the literal ſenſe.

As to the ſecond ſenſe, *viz. the word was made fleſh*, or united to a whole man, ſoul and body (the term *fleſh* being put for the term *man* in this caſe) as this ſuppoſes the exiſtence of the word antecedent to his union, as aforeſaid; ſo the perſon of Chriſt, upon this principle, muſt be conſtituted of two individual intelligent rational ſpirits, united to one human body, and theſe three, in their united ſtate, muſt conſtitute the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, which makes it very unlikely to me to be the true ſenſe of the text, for the reaſons following. *Firſt*, becauſe the perſon thus conſtituted

tuted would not be a man, which the ſcriptures repreſent the perſon of Chriſt to be, a man being conſtituted of only one individual intelligentrational ſpirit, united to only one individual human body; theſe two, and they only, in their united ſtate, being that which conſtitutes a man, properly ſo called: whereas if there are two rational ſpirits, united to one human body, in the perſon of Chriſt; this exceſs of parts would eſſentially difference him in that which is made the ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind, and conſequently, he would not be a man upon this principle. *Secondly*, we have no mention of two rational ſpirits in the perſon of Chriſt, nor any intimation of it in all the *Bible*. And tho' this doctrine is urged as neceſſary to reconcile ſome texts of ſcripture which claſh with each other, according to ſome mens interpretation of them; yet this is altogether needleſs becauſe thoſe texts can be eaſily reconciled, or rather they do not claſh, when they are underſtood in the moſt likely and rational ſenſe. The true ground or reaſon of mens advancing this unſcriptural doctrine, I take to be this. Some men have unjuſtly inferred from ſome texts of ſcripture, that Jeſus Chriſt, or the Son of God, is himſelf the ſupreme God, whereas the Son himſelf hath expreſsly declared the contrary; therefore to remove the difficulty which they themſelves have made, they imagine two rational natures in the Perſon of Chriſt; and then they put it off with this pretence, when Chriſt ſaith [*my Father is greater than I*] he did not mean his own perſon, but only a part of it, *viz.* his human nature, as they call it. I call this, a pretence, becauſe there is no mention of Chriſt's having two rational natures in his perſon, nor any intimation of it in all the *Bible*, as I ſaid before. My third reaſon is, becauſe one rational ſpirits in the Perſon of Chriſt, was

ſufficient

ſufficient for all the offices, performances, and works which he was called to, or did perform: and therefore it is very irrational, in my opinion, to ſuppoſe that he had a ſuperfluity, which two rational ſpirits in his perſon muſt be, eſpecially if we add to this, what ſome maintain, *viz.* that one of theſe rational natures was quieſcent, was put by as uſeleſs, was laid a-ſleep in non-activity, if I may ſo ſpeak. My fourth, and laſt reaſon is, becauſe our Saviour's words and actions are repreſented by St. *John* (in the words after the text) as proceeding from one and the ſame fountain of action: *the word*, *the only begotten of the Father*, and *Jeſus Chriſt*, being uſed as ſynonymous terms to expreſs one and the ſame thing. *The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* Verſe 17. *The law was given by* Moſes, *but grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt.* Here we ſee, that the *word*, *the only begotten of the Father*, and Jeſus Chriſt, are convertible terms, uſed by the *Evangeliſt* to expreſs one and the ſame thing. They beheld the glory of the word (which they could not have done if he was quieſcent and acted not.) They had ſeen the wonderful works which he had done, and had heard the gracious words which came out of his mouth, words full of grace and truth: and ſo had beheld that glory which God had reſerved to, and honoured his only begotten Son with: for tho' the law was given by *Moſes*, yet that fulneſs of grace and truth, which was to be diſpenſed under the goſpel, was peculiarly reſerved to be diſpenſed by the word, or Jeſus Chriſt, the only begotten Son of God. For theſe reaſons, it ſeems very unlikely to me, that the true ſenſes of the forementioned text ſhould be, that the word was made or united to a whole man, ſoul and body.

As to the third and fourth ſenſes which may be put upon the forementionʼd text, *viz. thirdly*, the word was made or united to a human body, or fleſhy part, and ſo became a human ſoul to that body it was united to: or, *fourthly*, *the word was fleſh*, or a man; the term *fleſh* being put for the term *man*, as in the ſecond caſe already conſiderʼd. I ſay, whichever of theſe be the true ſenſe, it makes no alteration with reſpect to me; becauſe in either of theſe, the word, and the only begotten Son of God, expreſſes, or implies no more than the man Chriſt Jeſus, which I call, the whole Chriſt. And ſo I ſhall paſs them over without any other remark, but this, *viz.* that the third caſe ſuppoſes the exiſtence of our Saviourʼs rational ſpirit, antecedent to his conception in the womb of the Virgin: and the fourth caſe does not deny, nor contradict it. Upon the whole, I ſay, as the man Chriſt Jeſus is called *the only begotten Son of God*; ſo it is he alone which conſtitutes that whole perſon who is ſo called. And as his Being or perſon, is the Son of God; ſo he is a diſtinct individual Being or Perſon from that God whoſe Son he is. So that tho' Mr. *Claggett* hath undertaken the confutation of my arguments, yet he has fallen vaſtly ſhort of it; and conſequently they remain in their full ſtrength, proving what they were produced for, notwithſtanding what he hath urged againſt them, and this will appear from an examination of the particulars.

My firſt argument ſtands thus, the Son received his Being and exiſtence from the Father, as the firſt ſupreme free cauſe of that Being and exiſtence conſequently he is inferiour, *&c.* This argument hath three branches; *firſt*, that the Father is the cauſe; *ſecondly*, that he is the firſt and ſupreme cauſe; and, *thirdly*, that he is the free cauſe of the Son's being and exiſtence. The firſt of theſe Mr.

Claggett

Claggett allows, by aſſerting, that the Father begets the Son by a neceſſity of nature, and conſequently he muſt be the cauſe of the Son. As to the ſecond, I ſuppoſe he allows it; becauſe he hath not, as I can perceive, objected any thing againſt it. And as to the third branch, he denies it in expreſs words, but allows it in conſequence. He denies it, by aſſerting, that the Father begets the Son, not from the freedom of his will, but from a neceſſity of nature. He allows it in conſequence, by allowing, *firſt*, that God is the moſt free agent in all things without himſelf, as in *page* 14 and *ſecondly*, by maintaining, that the man Chriſt Jeſus, which he calls the human nature (and which is the true and only begotten Son of God) is in his nature both body and ſoul of the ſame ſpecies with all other men; the proving (or rather the endeavouring to prove) which point is the burden of his book. Now if the man Chriſt Jeſus, or the human nature (as Mr. *Claggett* is pleas'd to call him) is of the ſame ſpecies with all other men; and if all men are without God, and if God is entirely free, with reſpect to the produce of every thing without himſelf, which I think he hath allowed, then it will follow, by unavoidable conſequence, that the man Chriſt Jeſus, or the whole and only begotten Son of God, was begotten, not from a neceſſity of nature, but by a freedom of will; and ſo the ſtrength of my argument is ſtill remaining. As to the imaginary Son of God, *viz.* the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of God, or the Father, as this is not the real Son, but, on the contrary, is the Father of the Son of God; ſo my argument is wholly unconcerned with it. I have aſſerted nothing concerning God, or the Father, and his eſſential properties, which are himſelf, and not his Son, but only concerning God and

his only begotten Son; and therefore in what he hath to ſay, with reſpect to this imaginary ſon, he fights without an adverſary, with reſpect to me.

My ſecond argument ſtands thus, the Son receiveth gifts and bleſſings from the Father; and conſequently is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father, according to St. *Paul*'s way of arguing in *Abraham* and *Melchiſedech*'s caſe, as in *Heb.* vii. 7. *Without all contradiction the leſs is bleſſed of the better.* In anſwer to this, Mr. *Claggett* "deſires it may "be obſerv'd, that our controverſy is not about "a ſuperiority of order, or office, but of eſſence "and nature; whether the Son is of the ſame "ſubſtance and eſſence with the Father or not: "we affirm, he denies."

In reply to which, I deſire it may be obſerv'd, that what he ſaith, is his miſtake; for I have aſſerted nothing, with reſpect to a ſuperiority of nature, but only with reſpect to the relation which the Father and Son ſtand in one to another. The terms *ſuperiour* and *inferiour*; *ſupreme* and *ſubordinate*, are relative terms, which, in their moſt proper ſenſe, are expreſſive, not of the nature, but only of the relation which one intelligent rational being ſtands in to others. Thus, the Mayor of *Saliſbury* is inferiour and ſubordinate to King *George*, tho' they are both of one ſpecies or kind of eſſence, conſidered as men. The Mayor of *Saliſbury* is inferiour to King *George*, as he is King *George*'s ſubject; and he is ſubordinate to King *George*, as he hath received authority from him, and exerciſes it under him. So in like manner, upon a ſuppoſition that the Son of God and his Father are both of one ſpecies or kind of eſſence, yet notwithſtanding this, the Son is inferiour to his Father. He is inferiour to him, as he is his Father's ſubject (his Father is his God) and he is ſubordinate to him, as he hath received authority

rity or headſhip over his church from him, and exerciſes it under him. But to return to my argument. Mr. *Claggett* denies that the imaginary Son of God was exalted, about which I have aſſerted nothing. I have not aſſerted, that the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father (which in fact is the very Father) was exalted. I have only aſſerted, that the true and real Son of this Father was exalted, *viz.* the man Chriſt Jeſus, which Mr. *Claggett* calls, *Chriſt's human nature*, and which he allows was exalted, as in *page* 27. "It is manifeſt enough (ſaith he) that the "text points out the exaltation of Chriſt's hu-"man nature, which was humbled even to "death." Seeing then that the true and only begotten Son of God was exalted, it will follow, that my argument remains unſhaken.

Here it ſeems proper for me to obſerve, that Mr. *Claggett* puts the queſtion to me, how Chriſt could be exalted in his higheſt nature upon my principles. (*Note*, I have not allowed that Chriſt hath two rational natures, but have uſed the diſtinction only for argument's ſake; and therefore Chriſt's higheſt nature, or his moſt divine part, with reſpect to my principles, is his rational or ſpiritual part, as diſtinguiſhed from his fleſhy or bodily part.) He repeats this queſtion, in other places of his book, and oppoſes to me what I have ſaid of Chriſt, in the twenty-eighth page of my book. To which I anſwer, what I ſaid, in the page referred to, concerning our Saviour, in part reſpects what he is, and not what he was; what he is now he is exalted, and not what he was antecedent to it. (As to Chriſt's creating the world, I ſhall conſider it in its proper place.) And ſuppoſing that this queſtion did put me under a difficulty, which in reality it doth not; for tho' Chriſt was highly honoured before his debaſement,

yet he was capable of being exalted higher by his Father, as a reward of it. He was capable of being exalted at the right-hand of God, to be a prevailing interceſſor for his people, and to receive the honour which flows from that relation. He was capable of being conſtituted the judge of quick and dead, and ſo might have a name above every name, that to him every one ſhould give an account of himſelf. But ſuppoſing the aforeſaid queſtion did bring me under a difficulty, which, as I have obſerved, it doth not, yet I am of the mind that Mr. *Claggett*'s principles bring him under a greater. And ſeeing we are upon a queſtion, I beg leave to put the ſame queſtions to him as I once did to a neighbouring gentleman.

1. *Which was the higheſt exaltation of the humanity of Jeſus Chriſt, for it to be ſo united to the ſupreme God (or as the* Athanaſian creed *expreſſes it, taken into God) as that it and the ſupreme God, which it is united to, do conſtitute but one individual Perſon; or, for it to be exalted at the right-hand of the ſupreme God?*
2. *When the humanity of Jeſus Chriſt was thus united to, or taken into the ſupreme God, muſt it not be again ſeparated from, or taken out of him, before it could be capable of being exalted at his right-hand?*

The reaſon of my propoſing theſe queſtions was, *firſt*, becauſe I take it for granted, that the ſo taking of a man into perſonal union with the ſupreme God, as that the ſupreme God and that man do conſtitute but one Perſon, was the higheſt exaltation that the ſupreme God could give, or that man could partake of. I ſay, ſuch an union, if ſuch a thing could be, was (as I conceive) the higheſt exaltation that it was poſſible for God to give, or for a man to partake of. *Secondly*, the *Athanaſians* hold, that the humanity of Jeſus Chriſt was ſo taken into perſonal union

with the ſecond Perſon of the trinity, as that it, and that ſecond Perſon, do conſtitute one individual Perſon, in their united ſtate, and that this united Perſon is the ſupreme God. *Thirdly*, the ſcriptures aſſert, that the Perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, and conſequently the humanity in him, was highly exalted, after his crucifixion, at the right-hand of God. This being ſo, I ſay, upon a ſuppoſition that the humanity of Jeſus Chriſt was united to a Perſon, as aforeſaid, *viz.* to the ſecond Perſon of the trinity, then, I think, it will unavoidably follow from hence; either, *firſt*, that the Son or ſecond Perſon is not the ſupreme God, becauſe the humanity did receive a higher exaltation from the Father, or firſt Perſon, by being exalted at the right-hand, than it did from the Son, or ſecond Perſon, by being taken into perſonal union with him, which could not have been if the Son himſelf had been the ſupreme God; or elſe, *ſecondly*, if the Son was himſelf the ſupreme God, and if the humanity was exalted as high as it was capable by its union with him, then the humanity muſt be ſeparated from the Son, and the bond of union muſt be diſſolv'd, before it could be capable of receiving exaltation from the Father.

The gentleman, in his anſwer to my queſtions, allowed what I took for granted, *viz.* that the ſo taking of a man into perſonal union with the ſupreme God, as aforeſaid, was the higheſt exaltation that it was poſſible for God to give, or for a man to partake of. Again he allowed, what the *Athanaſians* do hold, *viz.* that the humanity of Jeſus Chriſt was ſo united to the ſecond Perſon of the trinity, as that it and that ſecond Perſon do conſtitute but one individual Perſon, in their united ſtate, and that this united Perſon is the ſupreme God: but then, leſt he ſhould be

brought into a dilemma (as he called it) he in effect denied what the ſcriptures do aſſert, *viz.* that the Perſon of Chriſt, and conſequently the humanity in him, was highly exalted at the right-hand of God. But tho' the forementionʼd gentleman denied, that the humanity of Chriſt had any farther exaltation than its union as aforeſaid; yet Mr. *Claggett* has allowed, that Chriſtʼs human nature was exalted after that union, by his allowing that *Phil.* ii. 9. points out the exaltation of Chriſtʼs human nature, *page* 27. which exaltation was after his crucifixion. Now if the humanity of Chriſt, as he calls it, was ſo highly exalted as to be perſonally united to the ſupreme God, and ſo perſonally united as that it and the ſupreme God conſtitute one and the ſame individual Perſon, I think it will be a difficulty upon him to ſhew how this humanity could have any higher exaltation.

My third argument ſtands thus; the Father is ſaid to be the God of the Son, therefore the Son is inferiour, *&c.* Mr. *Claggett* anſwers, that the Son, in his human nature, is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father. Now as I have already proved, that the human nature, or the man Chriſt Jeſus, is the whole and only begotten Son of God; and that what he calls *the divine nature* is ſo far from being the Son, that on the contrary, it is the Father of the Son of God: from hence it will follow, that this argument remains in its full force.

My fourth argument ſtands thus; the Father is ſaid to exerciſe authority, in commanding, and the Son ſubmiſſion, in obeying the Fatherʼs commands; and conſequently the Son is ſubordinate and inferiour, *&c.* Mr. *Claggett* anſwers, that the Son, in his human nature, is Godʼs ſervant, and ſubmiſſively obeys the Father, and the Father is

ſuperiour

ſuperiour to the Son, *&c.* and ſo he here allows all that I have been proving in my argument, *viz.* that the true and only begotten Son of God is inferiour, *&c.* and all that he offers againſt me, is that the Father's eſſential properties, which are the very Father, are not inferiour to himſelf, which I have never denied.

My fifth argument ſtands thus; the Son is the Father's agent, in thoſe acts which are aſcribed unto him; and the Son received from the Father both direction and ability for their performance; conſequently the Son is inferiour, *&c.*

This Mr. *Claggett* anſwers, by ſuppoſing that creating power is uncreated power, and that this power is incommunicable, and that the Son did not create as an agent, but as a co-efficient, and thus he thinks he hath confuted my argument. To which I anſwer, upon a ſuppoſition that Chriſt was not the Father's agent in creating the world, yet my argument remains in full force notwithſtanding; becauſe if this evidence proves defective, yet I have produced other evidence to prove my point, in which Chriſt was an agent or factor for his Father, according to Mr. *Claggett's* ſenſe of that term. An agent, he ſaith, is one that acts by commiſſion from another, in the uſe and exerciſe of his own natural power. Let it be ſo. Thus Chriſt acted by commiſſion from his Father, in the publiſhing of his Father's will, and in demanding the fruits of his Father's vineyard, as in *John* iv. 34. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work.* Chap. v. 43. *I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another ſhall come in his own name, him ye will receive.* Chap. vi. 38. *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me.* Matt. xxi. 34, 37. *And when the time of fruit drew near, he ſent his ſervants*

ſervants to the huſbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it, ——— *but laſt of all he ſent unto them his ſon, ſaying, they will reverence my ſon.* In the works here referred to, I ſuppoſe, it will be allowed that the Son was the Father's agent, *viz.* in the publication of his Father's will; becauſe in this performance, as he acted by commiſſion from his Father; ſo he did it in the exerciſe of his own natural power; which natural power, I call *a derived power*; becauſe he derived it originally from his Father, and ſo it was the Father's power. But perhaps Mr. *Claggett* will turn it upon me, and ſay, that he was an agent in his human nature only. To which I anſwer, what he calls, the human nature, *viz.* the man Chriſt Jeſus, I ſay, was the whole and only begotten Son of God. And what he calls, the divine nature of the Son, *viz.* the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father, I have ſhewn, can in no ſenſe be called the Son of the Father; becauſe it is in fact the very Father himſelf; and conſequently the Son, which my arguments refers to, was the Father's agent, as aforeſaid.

Now I come to conſider what Mr. *Claggett* hath to ſay, with reſpect to my aſſerting, that Chriſt, or the Son of God, created the world. I need not go into all the turnings and windings of his argument. It is ſufficient to my purpoſe to obſerve, that when I aſcribed creating power to the Son, I did it in no other ſenſe than I do aſcribe miraculous power to the Apoſtles. Our Saviour ſaid unto his diſciples, as in *Matt.* xvii. 20. *If ye have faith as a grain of muſtard ſeed, ye ſhall ſay unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it ſhall remove; and nothing ſhall be impoſſible unto you.* Now if the Apoſtles had at any time ſaid to a mountain, *remove hence to yonder place*; and if it had removed accordingly, I ſhould have thought

that

that I may truly ſay, they had power to remove a mountain, or that they did remove a mountain, or that God did it by them, and yet not aſcribe omnipotency to them, *John* xiv. 12. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do ſhall he do alſo, and greater works than theſe ſhall he do, becauſe I go unto my Father.* And I ſhould perhaps have called the Apoſtles *God's agents*, in ſuch a work. But Mr. *Claggett* now informs me, that the term *agent* in ſuch a caſe would have been improperly applied; and if ſo, I am content to have it put by. So in like manner we read in *Eph.* iii. 9. *That God created all things by Jeſus Chriſt.* By creation here I underſtood the creation of this world; and I thought, that the rational or ſpiritual part of our Saviour had acted the ſame part in this creation as the Apoſtles did in the removing of a mountain, if ſuch a remove at any time took place; and I thought, that I might truly ſay, upon the ſame grounds, that Chriſt had power to create the world, or that he did create it, or that God created it by him, and yet not aſcribe omnipotency to him, and I thought, I might juſtly ſay, that he was God's agent in this work; but now I am told otherwiſe. However, Mr. *Claggett* may ſee from hence, that his time and pains were ſpent in vain, in this particular. And tho' he is pleaſed to take it for granted that creating power is incommunicable, yet that does not determine me to be of his judgment in this point; for as it ſeems to be a bold limitation of God's power, ſo likewiſe, for ought that I can ſee reaſon to the contrary, it is equally as eaſy for God to communicate creating power, as for him to communicate generating power, or any other ſort of power whatever. We are informed, by experience, as well as from divine revelation, that one man begets another man. Now if a begotten

ſon may have power to beget another ſon, why may not a creature have power from God to create another creature? Mr, *Claggett* ſuppoſes, he cannot; but perhaps this may be a cannot of his own making. Suppoſe that God had propagated the ſeveral ſpecies of living creatures (which inhabit this earth) ſome other way, and not by generation, it is likely, if this had been ſo, Mr. *Claggett* might then have as freely pronounced generating power omnipotent and uncreated, as he now does creating power.

If Mr. *Claggett* ſhould reply, that in human generation a ſon is not begotten or produc'd out of nothing. I anſwer, it is ſufficient to remind him, that the creating of things out of nothing is no-where aſcribed to Chriſt in the ſcriptures. And as *Adam*'s body was produced from the duſt of the ground; ſo the producing it of that ſpecies was properly a creating of it, according to the uſe of that expreſſion, in the language of the ſcriptures. Beſides we are no-where aſſured from ſcripture, that this earth was created out of nothing, when it was produced into that form in which it now is. We read, *that God created the heavens and the earth*; *and that the earth was without form, and void*; *and that darkneſs cover'd the face of the great deep*: but we do not read, that the earth was nothing antecedent to its creation; and therefore Chriſt might create the world, and yet not create it out of nothing; I ſhall not enter into ſo nice and philoſophical an enquiry, as to examine, whether there be any ſuch thing as created power, properly ſo called. I think all power, properly ſpeaking, is God's power, whether it be created or uncreated, tho' the exerciſe of it, in different degrees, hath a dependence upon the will of free creatures. When I move my finger up or down, the power which is exerciſed in that act, I think,

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is God's power; and it is no farther my power, than as God hath given me the uſe of it, or as it hath a dependence upon my will for the exerciſe of it; and if my finger ſhould be, at any time, moved up or down, independent of my will, that would not be my action. The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to any other human action. All the power which is exerciſed in any of theſe acts is certainly God's power; but foraſmuch as the exerciſe of this power depends upon our will, therefore the actions which are performed by it are properly our actions. And as the power, which is exerciſed in theſe, is ſaid to be our power, ſo I think it is ours only, in this reſpect, as God hath given us the uſe of it, or as the exerciſe of it depends upon our will. And tho' God cannot communicate to any being a power independent of himſelf, this being a contradiction, becauſe all communicated power muſt be dependent power; yet he may ſo far leave the exerciſe of his power to the will of free creatures, as that they may exerciſe it independent of his will: and that he doth ſo in fact is evident, becauſe this is the caſe in all the actual ſins which are committed; in which caſes men exerciſe God's power, independent of God's will. And in this God doth not commit ſin, tho' his power is exerciſed in the committing of it, becauſe the ſinfulneſs of theſe acts does not at all conſiſt in the power which is exerciſed, but only in the wrong uſe and exerciſe of it, in which alone, I think, the ſinfulneſs of any act conſiſts, *viz.* in its non-conformity to God's will. And tho' in the caſe of creation God may, if he pleaſes, ſo act as that there ſhall be no medium betwixt his will and the exerciſe of his power in the production of what he wills; yet he may, if he pleaſes, act otherways: and that he hath done ſo, is evident in his creating lice out of duſt, in the land of

Egypt,

Egypt, as in *Exod.* viii. 16. 17. In this caſe, as God will'd, that *Aaron*'s rod ſmiting the duſt of the ground ſhould change that duſt into lice, which was an act of creation; ſo *Aaron*'s ſmiting the duſt (which depended upon *Aaron*'s will) was by God's good pleaſure made neceſſary to that creation; and was a medium (by God's appointment, if I may ſo ſpeak) betwixt God's will, and the effecting (of what he will'd) by his power. And as God thus acted, when there was previous matter to work upon, *viz.* the duſt of the ground; ſo I doubt not but he could, if he had pleaſed, have produced lice by the inſtrumentality of *Aaron*, tho' there had been no previous matter to work upon, that is, he might have produced lice out of nothing, and have made the concurrence of *Aaron*'s will neceſſary to their production, and ſo might have created them by *Aaron*, and *Aaron* would have been, in their creation, God's inſtrument, or agent (or whatever term my adverſary ſhall allow to be proper in this caſe) in ſuch ſort as Chriſt and his Apoſtles were ſo, *Acts* ii. 22. and xv. 12. and xix. 11. 12. I farther obſerve, that upon a ſuppoſition God created this world, by the inſtrumentality or agency of his Son, yet his Son would have no right of dominion over this world, by virtue of that creation, as ſome men have freely maintain'd. Suppoſe that one man ſhould build a houſe by the agency of another man; in this caſe the agent would have no right to inhabit this houſe, by virtue of his being the builder of it, becauſe that right is wholly lodg'd in his principal: and he can have no right to habitation in this houſe, except his principal communicates it to him. So in like manner, if God created this world by Jeſus Chriſt, Jeſus Chriſt can have no right of dominion over it, by virtue of that creation, becauſe that right is wholly lodged

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in his principal. If what St. *Paul* ſaith ſhould be urged in this caſe, *viz. that all things were made by him, and for him* (to rule over.) I anſwer, they were made for him (to rule over) when God ſhould give the right of dominion into his hand, as he hath done under the goſpel diſpenſation. Suppoſe a man ſhould build an houſe by his agent for himſelf to live in for a year, and for his agent to live in when that year ſhould be expired, I think it might be truly ſaid of this agent, that the houſe was built by him, and for him (to live in) tho' he did not live in it ſo ſoon as it was built, and tho' his right of habitation was not founded upon his being the builder, but wholly upon the grace and bounty of his principal. So in like manner, if God created this world by Jeſus Chriſt, and for Jeſus Chriſt to rule over, when he ſhould give the right of dominion into his hand, as in this caſe all things would be made by him, and for him, ſo his right of dominion would not be founded in the act of creation, but wholly and ſolely upon the grace and bounty of his principal. Again I obſerve, if the world was created by the eſſential power of the Father only, as Mr. *Claggett* ſuppoſes, and if the eſſential power of the Father is the very Father, as I have ſhewed it is, and if the Son was not an agent in that work; then it will follow, that he was not a co-efficient in either; for as there muſt be two working together to conſtitute a co-efficient, and as the eſſential power of the Father, which is the very Father, and which is but one, and is not a ſecond, is the ſole efficient cauſe of the creation; ſo from hence it will follow, by an unavoidable conſequence, that there can be no ſuch thing as a co-efficient in the caſe. There is an efficient in the eſſential power of the Father, which is the very Father; but there is not a co-efficient, be-

cauſe

cauſe the eſſential power of the Father, which is the very Father, is but one, and is not a ſecond. Upon the whole, I obſerve, that if creating power is incommunicable, as Mr. *Claggett* ſuppoſes, from hence it will follow, that the real Son of the Father never had ſuch a power; for if the Father could not give it, the Son could not receive it. And if he never had ſuch a power, then he never exerciſed it, becauſe he could not exerciſe a power which he had not. And from hence will ariſe two conſequences, *firſt*, that I was under a miſtake when I aſcribed creation power, and creation work, to the Son of God: which error I am ready to retract whenſoever it can be proved to me that he could not, or that he did not exerciſe it. The ſecond conſequence is this, that thoſe places of ſcripture, wherein creation work is aſcribed to the Son, are to be underſtood, not in a proper, but in a figurative ſenſe: not of the natural creation, which *Moſes* hath given the hiſtory of, but of that ſpiritual creation, which *Iſaiah* propheſied ſhould be effected under the goſpel. And if my aſcribing creation work to Chriſt, in a proper ſenſe, is an error, it was my miſapplying thoſe texts which ſpeak about it that led me into that error. I applied them to the natural creation, when, upon this foot of argument, I ought to have applied them to the moral or ſpiritual creation. I was, in this caſe, like *Nicodemus*, who, when our Lord told him, *that a man muſt be born again*, or elſe he could not *ſee the kingdom of God*, preſently applied this to the natural birth, when he ought to have applied it to the ſpiritual birth. So in like manner, when I read, that *God created all things by Jeſus Chriſt; that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; that all things in heaven and in earth were made by him, and*

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for him, I haſtily applied this to the natural creation; whereas if creating power is incommunicable, as Mr. *Claggett* ſuppoſes, then I ought to have applied it to the moral or ſpiritual creation.

I now proceed to enquire, whether the perſon of Chriſt could be a man, upon my principles. I need not follow Mr. *Claggett* through that long diſcourſe, nor enter into all thoſe queſtions which * Mr. *Towgood*'s manuſcript hath furniſhed him with; and which I have already anſwer'd, in my obſervations on the manuſcript referr'd to, and on Mr. *Towgood*'s letter. For the full ſtating of this queſtion, I obſerve, that as God hath produced a multitude of things, and as mankind have for uſe or vanity encreaſed their number, ſo theſe things are ranged or diſtinguiſh'd into ſorts, and every ſort comes under a particular denomination or name, by which denomination or name every ſort (in our ſpeaking about them) is diſtinguiſh'd or known from all other ſorts of things. And as they are thus diſtinguiſh'd into ſorts, ſo there is ſomething peculiar to each ſort, which is the foundation of that diſtinction, and that is made the ſtandard of that ſort of thing, becauſe it is that, and that only, which makes an eſſential difference between it and all other ſorts of things. And as there is ſomething peculiar to each ſort of thing, which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies, ſo that peculiarity is always known, with reſpect to all thoſe ſpecies of things which come within our cogniſance, and of which we are capable of judging whether things belong to their ſpecies or not; for otherways we ſhould never be able to diſtinguiſh one thing from another, nor know what ſpecies things belong to. Thus for example, if the ſtandard of the ſpecies of gold was ſome

* The manuſcript, referred to, contained animadverſions on the ſupremacy of the Father, by Mr. *Towgood*, a diſſenting teacher at *Wilton*.

unknown quality in that metal, then it would follow, that we could not know whether any piece of metal was gold, or not; becauſe we could not diſcover whether that quality was in it, or not, which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies. To apply this to the caſe in hand. I think, with ſubmiſſion, that the true and only ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind, is this, *viz.* only one individual intelligent rational ſpirit, ſo united to only one individual human body, as that theſe two in their united ſtate do conſtitute one individual perſon; I ſay, one, and only one of each of theſe, in their united ſtate, does conſtitute a man, properly ſo called; becauſe *Adam*, the firſt man, and all the men that ever ſprang out of his loins, as far as we ever had any knowledge of them, were conſtituted of only one of each of theſe, united as aforeſaid. Now as this ſtandard conſiſts in ſomething known, as the ſtandard of all ſuch ſpecies muſt do which comes within our cogniſance, ſo I can eaſily judge who is a man, and who is not: and therefore, when I find a perſon, conſtituted as aforeſaid, I pronounce him a man; becauſe I find that in him which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies: and thus I prove *Adam* to be a man, and *David* to be a man, and *Chriſt* to be a man, and Mr. *Claggett* to be a man; becauſe I find, in each of theſe, that which is made the ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind. But if I put by this ſtandard, and ſet up ſomething which is unknown in its ſtead, then I am utterly at a loſs to know who is a man, and who is not; and conſequently, for ought I know, *Adam* might not be a *man*, nor *David*, nor *Chriſt* might be men; becauſe I cannot tell whether they had that in them which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies. And I think it will be a difficult thing for Mr. *Claggett* to prove, that either, or all of theſe before mention'd were men,

upon

upon any other grounds than thoſe I have laid down. If he ſhould reply, that the ſcriptures declare *Adam* to be a man, and *David*, and *Chriſt* to be men; let him remember, that in his opinion, this is no proof of the caſe, by his own declaration in the caſe of the angels that appear'd to *Lot*, with reſpect to which he tells me, as from Mr. *Whiſton*, that the ſcriptures ſometimes ſpeak of things, not according to what they really are, but according to what they appear to be; and conſequently, all that the ſcriptures prove in the caſe is, that *Adam*, *David*, and *Chriſt*, appear'd to be men, but they by no means prove them to be really ſo.

If he ſhould farther urge, that each of theſe had an human ſoul, and ſo they were men; becauſe an human ſoul and an human body, properly united, do conſtitute a man, properly ſo called; and the perſons before mention'd partaking of each of theſe, in their united ſtate, were men in the proper ſenſe of that term. I anſwer, this brings me to conſider the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, which, as it muſt be ſomething known, or elſe it is impoſſible that we can ever know who has an human ſoul, and who has not, ſo the ſtandard of this ſpecies I take to be only this, *viz.* the union of an intelligent rational ſpirit to an human body, as aforeſaid. Here I make the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, to conſiſt only in the relation, which an intelligent rational ſpirit ſtands in to an human body, which relation, is founded in its union, as aforeſaid. And according to this ſtandard I can prove, that *Adam* had an human ſoul, and that *David* and *Chriſt* had each of them an human ſoul; becauſe, upon examination, I find that each of theſe had intelligent rational ſpirits, united to human bodies, as aforeſaid: and ſo they had that in them which is made the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls. But

If I put by this ſtandard, and ſubſtitute ſomething unknown in the room of it, then I am utterly at a loſs to know what perſons have human ſouls, and what not; and conſequently I can have no aſſurance that *Adam*, or *David*, or *Chriſt*, had either of them an human ſoul; becauſe I cannot tell whether either of theſe had that in them which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies. And if I ſhould put the queſtion to Mr. *Claggett*, How know you that Chriſt was a man? Or how know you that he had an human ſoul? I fear he could give but a lame anſwer, except it be upon the grounds before mention'd. To ſay that he had an human ſoul, becauſe he was a man, and that he was a man, becauſe he had an human ſoul, is to argue in a circle. If it be ſaid, that he had an human ſoul, becauſe he was produced by human kind. I anſwer, if this was made the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, then *Adam* had not an human ſoul; and conſequently was not a man, becauſe he was not produced by human kind; and Chriſt would have an human ſoul but in part; and conſequently would be a man but in part, becauſe he was produced by human kind but in part. Beſides, ſuppoſe a woman ſhould bear and bring forth a creature, in the ſhape and likeneſs of an aſs, ſuch a creature, I think, would not be a man, in Mr. *Claggett*'s eſtimation, tho' he was produced by human kind. Or, if we ſhould make a rational ſpirit's inclination to a body the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, St. *Paul* would not be a man, according to this ſtandard, becauſe his ſpirit was ſo far from having this inclination, that on the contrary, he declares for himſelf, *that he deſired to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which was far better:* ſo Mr. *Claggett* will find it a difficult taſk to prove, that the rational ſpirit, in our Saviour, had ſuch an inclination. In fine, there is nothing that I can diſcover

cover which can be made the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, but the relation of an intelligent rational ſpirit to an human body, which relation is founded in its union, as aforeſaid. Having thus fixed the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, and of mankind, I can eaſily prove that Chriſt was a man, properly ſo called, upon my principles, tho' his rational ſpirit, conſider'd as a rational ſpirit, was much more excellent than the rational ſpirits of all other men or angels. And tho' Mr, *Claggett* glories over me, and inſults me, in a very unbecoming manner; yet I verily think, that he cannot prove, that Chriſt has an human ſoul, or that he is a man, upon any other principles than thoſe I have before laid down.

As to the ſtandard of the ſpecies of angels, whether it is founded in nature, relation, or office, or whatever it be, it is what I know nothing of, and therefore cannot determine ought concerning them. But upon a ſuppoſition, that the ſtandard of the ſpecies of angels is founded only in office, *viz.* a meſſenger, then I think it will follow, that whatever ſpecies a rational ſpirit is of, conſider'd as a rational ſpirit, yet if it is conſtituted by God to be his meſſenger, ſuch a one would properly come under the denomination of an angel. So in like manner, if the ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind, is only one individual human body, and only one intelligent rational ſpirit, ſo united as to conſtitute one and the ſame perſon in their united ſtate, as I have ſhewn it is, from hence it will follow, that where-ever theſe two are thus united, that perſon is properly a man, whatever ſpecies his rational ſpirit is of, conſider'd as a rational ſpirit; and conſequently, upon a ſuppoſition that the rational ſpirit in our ſaviour was much more excellent in its nature than the rational ſpirits in all other men, or of angels; yet foraſmuch as it was united to an

human body, as aforeſaid, he would be a man properly ſo called, becauſe he hath that in him which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies.

As to Mr. *Claggett*'s mathematical demonſtration, *viz.* that equals being ſubſtracted from equals, equals will remain. I anſwer, this is very true, tho' it is very little to his purpoſe, becauſe things may be equal in ſome reſpects, and unequal in others; and therefore when we ſubſtract equals from equals, the remainders will be equal only in thoſe reſpects, in which the firſt quantities given (to be ſubſtracted from) were ſo; which firſt given quantities, for brevity's ſake, I call *reſolvends*. Example: Suppoſe two flaggons, the one pewter, and the other ſilver, and both filled with liquor; here theſe will be equal in ſome reſpects, but not in all; they will be equally flaggons, and equally full; but with reſpect to them as a metal, they will not be equally pure, the one being pewter, and the other ſilver. Now if we ſubſtract the liquor from theſe, this will be a ſubſtracting equals from equals, and there will be equal remainders; but then theſe remainders will not be equal in all reſpects, but only in thoſe reſpects in which the reſolvends were ſo; they will be equally flaggons, but thoſe flaggons will not be of equal pureneſs, becauſe the one is pewter, and the other is ſilver. So in like manner Mr. *Claggett* is a man, and Chriſt is a man. Now, ſaith my adverſary, ſubſtract equals from equals, and the remainders will be equal. Very true, they will be ſo, ſo far as the reſolvends were ſo; but foraſmuch as the rational ſpirit in the man Chriſt Jeſus is much more pure and excellent than the rational ſpirit in the man Mr. *Claggett*, in this they are unequal; and therefore when we ſubſtract equals from theſe, *viz.* their bodies, the remainders will be equal only in thoſe reſpects in

which

which the reſolvends were ſo; *viz.* they will be equally rational ſpirits, or human ſouls, if it be proper to give them that name after their ſeparation, tho' the one will be vaſtly more pure and excellent than the other. And in this reſpect I ſaid, that Chriſt was a man, and more than a man; not more by an exceſs of parts, but more with reſpect to the excellency of his parts, and the nearneſs of his relation to God: not but if this is an improper way of ſpeaking, I am very free it ſhould be diſcarded, tho' if Chriſt is the ſupreme God, as Mr. *Claggett* maintains, then he is more than a man upon his principles; and therefore he as much expoſes himſelf as he does me, if his reflections in this point are juſt.

If it ſhould be farther urged, what is ſaid of Chriſt in *Heb.* i. 4. *Being made ſo much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.* Chap. ii. 17. *Wherefore in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful, and a faithful high prieſt, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people.* And if it ſhould be argued from hence, that Chriſt muſt have two rational natures in his Perſon, the one ſuperiour to angels, and the other upon a level with the ſouls of men, for otherways theſe texts are a contradiction, becauſe one and the ſame rational ſpirit cannot be vaſtly ſuperiour to angels, and yet be upon a level with, and like unto the ſouls of men. I anſwer, I have already ſhewn what is the ſtandard of the ſpecies of human ſouls, and what is the ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind; and in ſo doing I have ſhewn, that upon a ſuppoſition the rational ſpirit in the Perſon of Chriſt was vaſtly ſuperiour in nature to the rational ſpirits of all other men, or of angels; yet when it was united to an human body, as aforeſaid, his ſpirit would be an human

ſoul, and his Perſon would be a man, properly ſo called, becauſe he would have that in him which is made the ſtandard of that ſpecies; and conſequently there is no need of ſuppoſing two rational natures in Chriſt to ſecure the aforeſaid texts from a contradiction, becauſe the rational ſpirit in our Saviour, tho' it is ſuperiour to angels, yet it is like to the ſouls of men, in that both it and they are intelligent rational ſpirits, and in that they are alike united to human bodies, which are the very things that conſtitute the ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind. But

Farther I anſwer, the diſparity which the apoſtle makes between Chriſt and the angels, and the degree of exaltation, which the one obtained above the other, is not founded upon their having natures of a different ſpecies, but only and wholly in their relation: the one were ſervants, and the other was a Son. He was made ſo much better (or exalted ſo much higher) than the angels, *viz.* ſo much as a ſon is better or nearer in relation than a ſervant. A ſon and a ſervant may be both of one ſpecies with reſpect to their nature, and yet the one is a much better or nearer relation than the other. And this is the very argument of the Apoſtle. *He was made ſo much better* (or exalted ſo much higher) *than the angels, as he hath by inheritance* (or birth-right) *obtained a more excellent name* (or nearer relation) *than they.* Now the name which Chriſt, by birth-right, hath obtain'd better than the angels, is the name or relation of a ſon: and this the Apoſtle proves by quoting ſeveral texts out of the *Old Teſtament*, wherein the Son-ſhip of Chriſt, and the miniſtration or ſervitude of the angels to him was foretold: thus, *verſe* 5. *For unto which of the angels, ſaid he, at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* And again, *I will be to thee a Father, and thou ſhalt be to me a Son.* Verſe 6. And

again,

again, *when he bringeth in the firſt-begotten* (Son) *into the world*, he ſaith, *and let all the angels of God worſhip* (or ſerve) *him.* Verſe 7. *And of the angels he ſaith, who maketh his angels ſpirits, and his miniſters* (or ſervants) *a flame of fire.* Verſe 8. *But unto the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. A ſcepter of righteouſneſs is the ſcepter of thy kingdom. Thou haſt loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.* Here we ſee that the diſparity between Chriſt and the angels, and the degree of exaltation, which the one obtained above the others is founded in the different relation which they ſtand in to God. The one was a Son, an only begotten Son, whereas the others were but ſervants; he being made ſo much better, or exalted ſo much higher than the angels, as a ſon is better, or a nearer relation than a ſervant. And as he was thus exalted, ſo the *Pſalmiſt* adds a reaſon for it, *viz.* becauſe he was an obedient Son; a Son which loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity; therefore, or becauſe of this, his God, and his Father, exalted him, and gave him a throne or kingdom which ſhould laſt for ever and ever; even till he had ſubdued all things, and put all enemies under his feet. And he anointed him with the oil of gladneſs above his fellow-meſſengers, which are mentioned in the firſt verſe of this chapter. *God, who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake unto the fathers, by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son.* This Son, as he was an obedient Son, loving righteouſneſs, and hating iniquity; ſo God anointed him with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows, above any of thoſe whom God hath employed to make known his will, whether prophets or angels. He appointed him heir or lord of all things, and

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gave him a kingdom which ſhould laſt for ever. In a word, he exalted him ſo much higher than all other men or angels, as a ſon is better or more nearly related than a ſervant. Seeing then the diſparity betwixt Chriſt and the angels is not founded in nature, but relation, which is the argument of the Apoſtle, there can be no concluſive argument drawn from hence to prove, that Chriſt has two rational natures in his perſon, the one ſuperiour to angels in nature, and the other upon a level with the ſouls of men; becauſe if his ſoul was upon the level with the ſouls of men, in reſpect to nature, yet he would be ſuperiour to all other men, and angels, by virtue of his relation, as he is the Son of God.

As to *Heb.* ii. 17. *Wherefore in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful, and a faithful high prieſt, in things pertaining to God*, &c. I think, with ſubmiſſion, this text hath no relation to Chriſt's being made like unto his brethren with reſpect to his becoming a man, becauſe he is conſidered as ſuch by the Apoſtle in his reaſoning about him; and conſequently muſt be ſuch antecedent to his argument, which is built upon that ſuppoſition. *Wherefore it behoved him* (*viz.* the man Chriſt Jeſus, which was the ſeed of *Abraham*, as in the preceding verſe) *in all things to be made like unto his brethren* (*viz.* the reſt of mankind) *that ſo he might be a merciful, and a faithful high prieſt*, &c. Here the Apoſtle conſiders Chriſt as a man, as a brother to mankind: and he ſaith, it behoved this man, this brother of mankind, to be made like unto his brethren: not like unto them in that which conſtitutes the relation of a brother, becauſe that relation was contracted already antecedent to his argument, which is built upon it; but he muſt be made like unto them in ſome other reſpects,

viz.

viz. in that which was neceſſary to anſwer the end of his undertaking. It is juſt as if I ſhould ſay, it behoves the Biſhop of *Saliſbury*, in all things, to be made like unto his brethren the biſhops, for ſuch or ſuch a reaſon. Here it is plain the perſon referred to muſt be the Biſhop of *Saliſbury*, before my reaſoning can take place; and therefore his being made like unto his brethren the Biſhops, cannot mean his being made like unto them in that which conſtitutes the relation of a brother, becauſe that relation was contracted antecedent to my argument, which is founded upon it; but he muſt be made like unto them in ſome other reſpects, *viz.* in watching over, and taking care of the people, and the like. The ſenſe of the text I take to be this, *wherefore it behoved him* (the man Chriſt Jeſus *in all things* (afflictions and temptations) *to be made like unto his brethren*; that he, experiencing in himſelf the weakneſs and frailty of human nature, and how much bodily afflictions and ſufferings do tempt and incline to ſin, he might be the better diſpoſed to pity, commiſerate, and help all in thoſe circumſtances; and ſo *might be a merciful, and a faithful high prieſt in things pertaining to God*, &c. And that this is the ſenſe of the text is evident from the words following, which are theſe, *verſe* 18. *For in that he himſelf hath* [*ſuffered*] *being tempted, he is able* (or diſpoſed) *to ſuccour them that are tempted.* The Apoſtle ſaith, it behoved Chriſt to be made like unto his brethren, not with reſpect to our nature, but with reſpect to that which is a trial of our nature. The weakneſs of our nature is not diſcover'd till it is tried, and therefore it behoved our Redeemer to come under thoſe trials, that ſo he might be the better diſpoſed to pity and help thoſe who are tried. This I think is the argument of the Apoſtle; and therefore there can be

no concluſive argument drawn from hence to prove, that the rational ſpirit in our Saviour is, with reſpect to its nature, upon a level with the rational ſpirits of all other men.

If it ſhould be farther urged, that Chriſt *was made a little lower than the angels*, as in chap ii. 9. and conſequently muſt have two rational natures in his perſon, the one ſuperiour, and the other inferiour to the angels. I anſwer, he was made lower than the angels in his circumſtances, as he was expoſed to bodily ſufferings and death, which the angels are not. This is the argument of the Apoſtle; *But we ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower than the angels* ——— *that he by the grace of God ſhould taſte death for every man.* A ſon may be in worſe circumſtances than a ſervant, and ſo may be lower than a ſervant in that reſpect, and yet he is ſuperior to him with reſpect to his relation: and this is the caſe with reſpect to Chriſt and the angels, as he was the Son of man he was in worſe or lower circumſtances than the angels, he being expoſed to bodily ſufferings and death; and as he was the Son of God, he was ſuperiour to the angels, by virtue of his relation.

Here I beg leave to make a ſhort digreſſion, by ſpeaking a few words to the 10th, 11th, and 12th verſes of the firſt chapter to the *Hebrews*, which are commonly (tho' I think very wrongfully) applied to the perſon of Chriſt, they being (if applied to him) very foreign to the Apoſtle's argument. The Apoſtle, in the five foregoing verſes, had been proving the Sonſhip of Chriſt, and the appointed ſervitude and ſubjection of the angels to him, from ſeveral prophecies out of the *Old Teſtament*, which were a proper proof to the *Hebrews* who were perſuaded of the truth of theſe records. In the verſes under conſideration, he makes a neceſſary digreſſion from his argument,

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n order to let his reader know the certainty of the foregoing prophecies: for tho' heaven and earth ſhould change and paſs away, yet not a tittle of God's word ſhould fail. And this he doth, not in expreſs words, but by quoting another text out of the *Pſalms*, viz. *Pſalm* cii. 25, 26, 27. In which God's unchangeableneſs and eternity are fully declared, and from which the certainty and immutability of his councils and promiſes are neceſſarily inferred. The Apoſtle having quoted theſe verſes, does not draw the inference himſelf, but leaves it to be inferred by his readers, and returns again to his argument, as in *verſe* 13, 14. *But to which of the angels ſaid he at any time, ſit thou on my right-hand until I make thine enemies thy footſtool? Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation?*

I ſhall add a few words more to this digreſſion, with relation to *verſe* 8. of the forementioned firſt chapter to the *Hebrews*. *But unto the Son he ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever*, &c. This verſe, tho' it is applied to Jeſus Chriſt by the Apoſtle, in order to prove his relation of Sonſhip to God; yet it is ſuppoſed by ſome, not to belong to the man Chriſt Jeſus, which is properly the Son of God, but to that very God himſelf, which is his Father, which they imagine to be perſonally united to him, and which they call his divine nature. Now admitting (tho' not really granting) that there is ſuch a perſonal union, as is here ſuppoſed, betwixt the man Chriſt Jeſus, and that God, which is his Father, (and which Father, for argument-ſake, I call *Chriſt's divine nature*) yet this text can by no means be applied to that divine nature, becauſe if it is, it no way ſerves the Apoſtle's purpoſe. The Apoſtle's buſineſs, in this chapter, is to prove, that the meſſenger

which

which publiſhed the goſpel grace, is the Son of God; that ſo he might raiſe an argument, from the dignity of his perſon, to enforce obedience to his doctrine. Now for the Apoſtle to quote a text which properly does not belong to this meſſenger, but only to another nature united to him, and which, properly ſpeaking, is his Father; I ſay, to quote ſuch a text is beſides his purpoſe, becauſe it no way proves the point in hand. And as the words following, in *verſe* 9. are allowed to be ſpoken of the man Chriſt Jeſus; ſo, I think, I may ſay of theſe two verſes, as the Reverend Dr. *Bennet* (in his *diſcourſe of the trinity*, in *page* 85.) ſaith of *Phil.* ii. 5——11. Let any man attentively read St. *Paul*'s words, and he can't but perceive, that the very ſame intelligent Being, whoſe *throne is for ever and ever*; *the ſcepter of whoſe kingdom is a ſcepter of righteouſneſs*; who is called *God*, and is addreſſed to as the *Son of God*, as in *ver.* 8. is the very ſame as he, *who becauſe he loved righteouſneſs, and hated iniquity* (in the exerciſe of his miniſtry) *therefore his God and Father anointed him with the oil of gladneſs above his fellow-meſſengers*, as at *verſe* 9. I ſay, whoever attentively reads theſe words, can't but perceive, that what is ſaid in theſe two verſes, is applied by the *Pſalmiſt*, and by the Apoſtle, to one and the ſame intelligent Being.

Thus I have conſidered and ſtated the caſe, with reſpect to the ſpecies of mankind; and have ſhewn, that the perſon of Chriſt is a man, properly ſo called, upon my principles. But before I leave this point, I think it proper to remind Mr. *Claggett*, that however this matter ſtands with reſpect to me, yet the perſon of Chriſt could not be a man, properly ſo called, upon his principles. I have already obſerv'd, that the true and only ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind, is this, *viz.*

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only one individual intelligent rational ſpirit, ſo united to only one individual human body, as that theſe two, in their united ſtate, do conſtitute one individual perſon: I ſay, one, and only one of each of theſe, in their united ſtate, do conſtitute a man, properly ſo called; becauſe *Adam*, the firſt man, and all the men that ever ſprang out of his loins, ſo far as we ever had any knowledge of them, were conſtituted of only one of each of theſe, united as aforeſaid. Now foraſmuch as the perſon of Chriſt (upon Mr. *Claggett*'s principles) was conſtituted of two diſtinct intelligent rational ſpirits, united to one human body, it will follow, that the perſon thus conſtituted cannot be a man, properly ſo called; becauſe that exceſs of parts which takes place in ſuch a perſon does eſſentially difference him from that which is made the ſtandard of the ſpecies of mankind.

To conclude this point, I ſay, if what Mr. *Claggett* ſo earneſtly contends for, be truth, *viz.* that the rational ſpirit in our Saviour, which he calls his human ſoul, is in fact of the ſame ſpecies (conſidered as a rational ſpirit) and ſtands upon a level with the rational ſpirits in all other men; then it will follow, by unavoidable conſequence, that the real Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is, with reſpect to his nature, a man, and but a man, and no more than a man, which I think is plainly *Socinianiſm*: for as to the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father, which Mr. *Claggett* calls *Chriſt's divine nature*, theſe I have ſhewn are in no reſpect the Son of God: nay, they are ſo far from being the Son of God, that on the contrary they are the Father of God's Son. And the *Socinians* do not aſſert that theſe eſſential properties of the Father are a man, and no more than a man. All that they affirm, is, that the very Son of God, or that Being which truly ſtands

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in the relation of a Son to God, and who ſaith of himſelf that God is his Father: it is this Being that they affirm is a man, and but a man, and no more than a man. It is this very Being which Mr. *Claggett* hath taken ſo much pains to prove is a man, and but a man, and no more than a man, of which the *Socinians* affirm, as aforeſaid. And thus his principles do plainly iſſue in *Socinianiſm*. Whether his principles, in this point, are true or falſe, I have no need to diſpute with him, becauſe it makes no alteration, with reſpect to my arguments, the Son being equally inferiour and ſubordinate to his God and Father, whether his rational ſpirit, conſidered as a rational ſpirit, be of the ſame, or of a different ſpecies from the rational ſpirits in all other men. I do not uſe the term *Socinian* here as a name of reproach. All that I obſerve this for, is, to let Mr. *Claggett* ſee that his principles do plainly iſſue in what he ſeems to loath. Neither do I ſay, that he is a *Socinian*, for if I did ſo, I ſhould do him wrong; for as he holds an exceſs of opinion to that of the *Socinians*, viz. his calling the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father (which are in fact the very Father) by the name *Son*, and his adding this imaginary ſon to the true and only begotten Son of God: I ſay, this exceſs of opinion does eſſentially difference him from thoſe chriſtians called *Socinians*, and therefore I do not call him a *Socinian*. All that I ſay is, that his principles do plainly iſſue in *Socinianiſm*.

My ſixth argument ſtands thus; 'tis the Son's expreſs declaration in this matter, viz. *that he is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father*, &c. Mr. *Claggett* anſwers, that the Son, with reſpect to his manhood, is inferiour, *&c.* and conſequently allows all that my argument was deſigned to prove; for as what he calls *the manhood*, is the whole and only

only begotten Son of the Father; ſo what he calls *the divine nature* (*viz.* the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father) this is in no reſpect the Son of the Father, but on the contrary, is the Father of God's Son. Now, as my argument relates wholly to the real Son, and is no way concern'd with the imaginary ſon of the Father, it will follow, that it remains concluſive, proving what it was produced for.

My ſeventh argument ſtands thus, the Son did pray to the Father, in behalf of himſelf, conſequently the Son is inferiour, *&c.* Mr. *Claggett* anſwers, that he allows the premiſes, but denies the concluſion. He allows, that the Son did pray to the Father in his human nature, and he allows that that nature which prayed was inferiour to the Father, *&c.* which, if I miſtake not, is allowing the concluſion alſo. I have already obſerved, that Mr. *Claggett* diſtinguiſhes the Son of God into two natures, *viz.* his human, and his divine nature, and have likewiſe ſhewn, that what he calls *the human nature*, is the whole and only begotten Son of God; and that what he calls *the divine nature*, *viz.* the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father, is in no reſpect the Son of God, but on the contrary, is the Father of God's Son; and therefore for Mr. *Claggett* to oppoſe me with an imaginary ſon, inſtead of the real and very Son of God, is plainly a departing from the queſtion; becauſe I never made ſo ridiculous an aſſertion, as that the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father (which are in fact the very Father) did pray to the Father, or that they were inferiour and ſubordinate to him, which, in other words, is to aſſert, that the Father pray'd to himſelf, and that he is inferiour and ſubordinate to himſelf.

My eighth argument ſtands thus, the Son did debaſe himſelf in his taking human nature upon

him, ſo as that he was in a leſs degree of glory after his being a man, than he was in, antecedently to that debaſement, conſequently the Son is inferiour, *&c.* In anſwer to which Mr. *Claggett* goes back to the ſubject upon which he had ſo long dwelt before, *viz.* that the perſon of Chriſt is not a man upon my principles, and that upon a ſuppoſition, that if the rational ſpirit, in the perſon of Chriſt, was in a ſtate of glory before his union with a human body, he would not become a man or take upon him human nature by ſuch an union: all which I have already anſwer'd. He farther urges, that I ſay, this ſuper-angelical creature laid aſide all the glory and perfection of his nature. But this is not true. I have ſaid no ſuch thing. I have ſaid, that the Son did debaſe himſelf, in his taking human nature upon him, and that he was in a leſs degree of glory after his being a man than he was antecedent to that debaſement. I have ſaid, if the Son has paſſed thro' ſuch a change as to be either leſſen'd or increas'd in his perfection and glory, then the conſequence is clear, that he is not the ſupreme God. And I have ſaid, ſeeing that our Lord did, in his higheſt or divine nature, paſs thro' ſuch a change, as from rich to become poor, it will follow, that he is inferiour, *&c.* But I have not ſaid, that he laid aſide all the glory and perfection of his nature. I have ſaid, that the Son did debaſe himſelf in his taking human nature upon him: but if this be an error, I am very free to retract it, when it appears to me to be ſo. There are many ſayings of our Saviour, which ſeem to ſuppoſe the pre-exiſtence of his rational part, antecedent to his birth from his mother's womb. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world. Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.* Now, as theſe words can, in no reſpect, be applied to the eſſential power

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and wiſdom of the Father, which are the very Father; becauſe the Father can, in no reſpect, be ſaid to go out from himſelf, and return to himſelf; ſo it will follow, that they muſt be applied to the real Son of the Father, which Mr. *Claggett* calls *the human nature*. And as they muſt be applied to him, I think, with ſubmiſſion, it muſt ſignify one or other of theſe two things, either his coming into the world at his birth, or elſe at his entring upon his miniſtry. If the former, then his rational ſpirit muſt be in a ſtate of exiſtence antecedent to that time: and if ſo, I think I ſaid truly, that he debaſed himſelf in his taking human nature upon him, or in his becoming a man, which is what I meant by that expreſſion. But if his coming forth from the Father implies no more than his entring upon his miniſtry, as *John the Baptiſt* was ſaid to be a man ſent from God, and if his rational part did not exiſt antecedent to his coming into the world at his nativity, then I acknowledge, I have err'd: which error I am ready to retract, when it ſhall be made appear to me, as I ſaid before. I have ſaid farther, upon this argument, that this is one eſſential character of the ſupreme God, *viz.* that he is eternally and unchangeably the ſame, without any addition to, or diminution of his perfection and glory: wherefore, if the Son has paſſed thro' ſuch a change as to be either leſſen'd or encreas'd in his perfection and glory, the conſequence is clear, that he is not the ſupreme God. Now, if the glory of the Son was either leſſen'd or encreas'd, (for either of theſe is ſufficient for my purpoſe) then it will follow, that he is not the ſupreme God. But the glory of the Son was encreas'd, which Mr. *Claggett* allows with reſpect to Chriſt's human nature, which human nature is the whole and only begotten Son of

God; and ſo the ſtrength of my argument is ſtill remaining.

The ſum of the matter is this; I have aſſerted and proved, by eight arguments, that the Son (by which I mean the real and only begotten Son of God) is inferiour and ſubordinate to the Father; by which Father, I mean the Father of this Son. Mr. *Claggett* oppoſeth me with an imaginary ſon, *viz*, the ſubſtantial power and wiſdom of the Father; which are ſo far from being the Son, that on the contrary, they are the very Father of God's Son, about which I have aſſerted nothing, or as Mr. *Claggett* truly ſaith, againſt which I oppoſed nothing, as in *page* 23. And therefore ſo far as what he hath to ſay in his book reſpects this imaginary ſon, ſo far he is beſide the queſtion, with reſpect to my arguments; and if this be ſubſtracted from the reſt, as it ought to be, I ſuppoſe himſelf will allow, that the ſtrength of my argument is ſtill remaining.

Laſtly, I obſerve, that as Mr. *Claggett* calls me *idolater*, *blaſphemer*, *one in ſheeps cloathing* (which implies a wolf) *a robber*, *the old ſerpent*, and the like, without any provocation (for as to my calling thoſe rude and baſe, which ſhould object againſt me, as Mr. *Claggett* ſaith, this is not true) I ſay, as he hath thus abuſed, and evil treated me, without any provocation given; ſo I would deſire him ſeriouſly to conſider, whether theſe weapons of his warfare are ſpiritual, as a chriſtian's ſhould be, or whether they are not carnal and diabolical. St. *Paul* adviſed the profeſſing chriſtians at *Corinth*, 2 *Cor*, xiii. 5. *To examine themſelves whether they were in the faith. Know ye not* (ſaith he) *that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates.* And he ſaith, *Rom.* viii. 9. *If any man hath not the ſpirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.* What uſe Mr. *Claggett* will make of this,

or

or whether he will have any more to ſay of me, or to me, I know not. He may if he pleaſes go on, and ſport himſelf and his readers, by laughing at and bantering that which is wholly out of his power to confute. He may go on to reproach and revile me. And tho' he has been pleaſed to ſit in judgment upon me, and condemn me, yet I can ſee no juſt ground for uneaſineſs upon this account; becauſe as he is not commended, whom men commend; but whom the Lord commendeth, ſo neither is he condemn'd, whom men condemn, but whom the Lord condemneth.

TRACT III.

AN

APPENDIX:

Being an enquiry concerning the *perſonal character* of the *Son* of *God*, and what is neceſſary to be believed concerning him; and likewiſe into the ſenſe and meaning of our Lord's words, *viz. Except ye believe that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins*; as in *John* viii. 24.

AS the *perſonal character* of the *Son* of *God* has been of late a ſubject of controverſy amongſt us, ſo it becomes a queſtion with ſome, if the Son be equal to the Father, and is himſelf the ſupreme God; whether all that believe him to be *inferiour* and *ſubordinate* to the Father, are not in a *damnable ſtate*? becauſe they reſt upon him for juſtification and ſalvation as upon a *creature*, and exerciſe their faith and hope upon him as ſuch; and ſeeing our Lord himſelf has declared, that *except ye believe that I am he* (*viz.* the ſupreme God, as they underſtand it) *ye ſhall die in your ſins.*

For a clear and full anſwer to this enquiry I obſerve, *firſt*, that if the name creature be *properly applied*, when applied, to every *derived being*, then in *that ſenſe* the Son is confeſſedly a *creature*, becauſe the ſcriptures declare that he derived his being from the Father. See *John* iii. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, &c. *John* vi, 57. *As the living Father ſent me, and I live by the Father; ſo he that eateth me, even he ſhall live by me.* In theſe texts it is as plainly aſſerted as words can expreſs it, that the Son *received* or *derived* his being from the Father, and that he *depends* upon his Father for his continuing

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to be; therefore, I ſay, as before, if the name creature be properly applied, when applied, to every derived being, then the Son is confeſſedly a creature; becauſe he derived his being from the Father: but if the name creature, be applicable only to ſuch things, as were produced after any *certain particular manner*, then the Son may very well be conceived not to be a creature.

Secondly, I obſerve, that whatever *different* apprehenſions we may have of the Son of God, theſe apprehenſions make no alterations in him, but he ſtill continues to be what he really is, notwithſtanding our miſtaken notions concerning him: from which it will follow, that if he is the Father's equal, and the ſupreme God, whoſoever truſts in him, *truſts* in the Father's *equal*, and in the *ſupreme God*, whatever miſtaken notions they may have concerning him. All that can be ſaid in this caſe is only this, whoever thinks him to be, what he really is not, or that thinks him not to be what he really is, when they make him the object of their faith and truſt, have only a *miſtaken notion* concerning him: their faith and truſt is the *ſame* whatever he is, and he is the *ſame* which is the object of that faith and truſt, and therefore all the difference muſt lie in this, *viz.* their *miſtaken notion* concerning him, whom they make the object of that faith and truſt: and ſo the queſtion will reſt here, whether this miſtaken notion, will be a *bar* to our *juſtification* and *ſalvation*.

For a clear anſwer to this queſtion, I conceive we muſt go back to the *chriſtian covenant*, becauſe it is that alone which diſcovers what is *neceſſary* to our juſtification and ſalvation; and therefore, I ſay, if the chriſtian covenant hath made faith in the Son as the Father's equal, and as the ſupreme God, *neceſſary* to our juſtification and ſalvation, then whoever thinks otherwiſe of the Son, is *excluded*

from that *covenant mercy*. But if faith in the Son, as ſuch, *viz.* as the Father's equal, and as the ſupreme God, is not made neceſſary by the chriſtian covenant, to our juſtification and ſalvation, then our *miſtaking* in this cannot be a *bar* to our juſtification and ſalvation: becauſe whatſoever is neceſſary to that end is *declared* to be ſo in that covenant; therefore whatſoever is not declared to be ſo in that covenant, the *want* of it can be no *bar* to our juſtification and ſalvation. Moreover, I ſay farther, that whoſoever makes any thing neceſſary to the juſtification and ſalvation of a ſinner, which the chriſtian covenant hath not made ſo, makes an *alteration* in, and an *addition* to that covenant, which Chriſt is the alone mediator of; and makes the way to eternal life ſtreighter than God and Chriſt have made it.

Now, that faith in the Son, as the *Father's equal*, and as the *ſupreme God*, is not made neceſſary to the juſtification of a ſinner, will appear from the ſacred ſcriptures, wherein the chriſtian covenant is contained, and wherein faith in the Son is required, in order to our juſtification and ſalvation. Matt. xvi. 15----18. *Whom ſay ye that I am? And* Simon Peter *anſwered and ſaid, thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, bleſſed art thou,* Simon Barjona, *fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I ſay unto thee, that upon this rock will I build my church.* John xi. 25, 27. *Jeſus ſaid unto her* (Martha) *I am the reſurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet ſhall he live; and whoſoever liveth, and believeth in me, ſhall never die. Believeſt thou this? She ſaith unto him, yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Chriſt the Son of God, which ſhould come into the world.* Chap. xx. 31. *Theſe things are written that ye might believe, that*

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Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life thro' his name. Acts viii. 37. Philip *ſaid, if thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt* (be baptized) *he* (the eunuch) *anſwered and ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God.*——— *And* Philip *baptized him.* Rom. x. 8---10. *That is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus; and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation.* Here we ſee, the faith which the chriſtian covenant makes neceſſary to our juſtification and ſalvation, is a believing that Perſon whom God approved by miracles, wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him, in the midſt of the *Jews*, Acts ii. 22. to be *Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of the living God*: and that faith in him as the Father's equal, and as the ſupreme God, is not made neceſſary by the chriſtian covenant to our juſtification and ſalvation: from which it will follow, that our *miſtaking* in this, can be no *bar* to our juſtification and ſalvation. And

Whereas our Lord ſaith, *except ye believe that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* The meaning of theſe words I think is as follows. By the term [ſin] I underſtand the doing any thing with the body or mind, which the light of reaſon or divine revelation makes a *crime*; or the omitting to do, that which the light of reaſon or divine revelation makes a *duty*. By [dying in ſin] I underſtand the dying under the *guilt* of *ſin*, and under the ſentence of that *law* which condemned it, without any *ſhare* or *fellowſhip* in the pardoning mercy of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

By the term [believe] I underſtand the act of the mind, which *aſſents* to the *truth* of any propoſition

ſition *revealed* or *teſtified* by another, upon rational grounds. But then, in the preſent caſe, it is not a bare aſſent or a fruitleſs faith, but it is ſuch a faith as becomes a *principle of action* in men. *Mark* i. 15. *The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the goſpel.* Luke vi. 46. *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I ſay?*

By the term [ye] I underſtand thoſe *Jews*, or ſome of them at leaſt, which our Lord was then ſpeaking to; who, tho' they were under the diſpenſation of *Moſes*, and were worſhippers of the *true God*; yet lived *wicked lives*, and ſo juſtly expoſed themſelves to the diſpleaſure of their maker.

As to the term [I] in theſe words, *except ye believe that* [I am he] I underſtand it to ſignify that *divine Perſon*, which the four *Evangeliſts* have given us the hiſtory of, his birth, life, death, reſurrection and aſcenſion. That divine Perſon which was born in *Bethlehem*, that was brought up in *Galilee*, that was baptized of *John* in *Jordan*, that went up and down in *Judea* preaching the goſpel of the kingdom of God, and wrought a multitude of uncontroulable miracles, to confirm the truth of his miſſion. This divine Perſon being at *Jeruſalem*, and in the temple, conferring with the *Jews*, at the time when theſe words of the text were ſpoken; he, *viz.* that human body which was viſible to the ſight and feeling of the *Jews* then, and there preſent; and that intellectual rational ſpirit which was united to, and animated that body, and which influenced and moved that tongue, which talked with them; he, and he only was intended by the term [I.] I ſay this divine Perſon, and he only, and not that God and Father which was with him, and by whoſe authority and power he did, and taught theſe things. *John* v. 30. *I can of mine own ſelf do nothing; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is juſt, be-*

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cauſe I ſeek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which ſent me. Acts ii. 22. *Ye men of* Iſrael, *hear theſe words, Jeſus of* Nazareth, *a man approved of God among you by miracles, wonders, and ſigns, which God did by him, in the midſt of you, as ye your ſelves alſo know.* Verſe 26, *Therefore let all the houſe of* Iſrael *know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* Chap. x. 38. *God anointed Jeſus of* Nazareth, *with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the devil, for God was with him.* Heb. i. 1, 2. *God, who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son; whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds.* I ſay, not this God and Father, but that divine Perſon, which this God and Father commiſſioned, and ſent forth, and enabled as aforeſaid, was he, and he only, which is intended by the term [I.]

As to the term [he] *except ye believe that I am* [he] it is the meaning of this term which is a matter of controverſy; and as the right underſtanding of it was neceſſary to the *Jews*, to whom thoſe words were ſpoken (becauſe if they did not underſtand who he was, they could not give their aſſent or believe who he was) ſo a true anſwer to the *Jews* queſtion, *viz.* Who art thou? is neceſſary to the preſent enquiry. The *Jews* were of various opinions, who this Perſon was. *Herod* ſaid he was *John the Baptiſt*, riſen from the dead. Some ſaid that he was *Elias*. Others that he was *Jeremias*. Others that he was one of the *old prophets* riſen again. Some ſaid that he was a *good man*. Others ſaid that he had a *devil*. Some ſaid that he was a *deceiver*. Others ſaid that he was the *Chriſt*. Now, amidſt the diverſity of opinions, con-

concerning who this Perſon was, I think we ought to enquire what he hath ſaid concerning himſelf in this reſpect; becauſe he expreſsly told the *Jews*, that what he had ſaid of himſelf, was what he intended by the term [he] as at *verſe* 25. And therefore what he hath ſaid of himſelf, I think ought in reaſon to determine this matter. And if we conſult the hiſtory of our Lord's life, from which alone we can have ſatisfaction in the preſent caſe, we ſhall there find what he hath ſaid of himſelf, whom he hath declared himſelf to be, and what he hath required that others ſhould believe concerning him. *John* iv. 25, 26. *The woman ſaith unto him, I know that Meſſias cometh which is called Chriſt; when he is come he will ſhew us all things. Jeſus ſaith unto her, I that ſpeak unto thee am he.* Chap. ix. 35-----38. *Jeſus heard that they had caſt him out, and when he had found him he ſaid unto him, doeſt thou believe on the Son of God? And he anſwered and ſaid, who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jeſus ſaid unto him, thou haſt both ſeen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.* Chap. x. 36. *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath ſanctified, and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid I am the Son of God?* Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. *The high-prieſt ſaid unto him, I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Chriſt the Son of God. Jeſus ſaith unto him, thou haſt ſaid.* Or as St. *Mark* expreſſes it, Chap. xiv. 61, 62. *The high-prieſt aſked him, art thou the Chriſt, the Son of the Bleſſed? and Jeſus ſaid, I am.* Here we ſee plainly, what this *divine Perſon* hath ſaid of himſelf, whom he hath declared himſelf to be, and what he hath required of others to believe concerning him, *viz.* that he is the *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, that he is the *only begotten Son of God*, that his God and Father hath *ſanctified*, and *ſent him* to be the *Lord* and *Saviour* of the world. This then appears evidently to be the meaning of

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the term [he] becauſe when the *Jews* put the queſtion to him, *Who art thou?* his anſwer was, *even the ſame that I ſaid unto you, from the beginning.*

So then, the meaning of the *whole ſentence*, I think, appears to be this, *viz.* you wicked *Jews*, who tho' you pretend to be worſhippers, and ſervants of the true God, yet live in a conſtant violation of his Laws; if you do not give your *aſſent* to this *truth*, (upon that rational evidence which hath been afforded for your conviction) that I am the *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, which God hath ſent into the world, to offer terms of peace and reconciliation to mankind; and if you do not accept of *God's grace*, on thoſe terms on which he offers it to you by my miniſtry, in turning every one of you from the *evil* of your ways, and by bringing forth the fruits of *newneſs* of life, ye ſhall die under the *guilt* of your *ſins*, without having any ſhare in the *mercy of God*, which is now graciouſly offered to mankind: and on the other ſide, if you do believe that I am the *Chriſt*, the *Son*, and *ſent of God*, and if you do accept of his gracious offer, by yielding up yourſelves a *lively ſacrifice* acceptable, and well pleaſing in his ſight, ye ſhall be *ſaved*.

Thus we ſee, what is the *true chriſtian faith*, with relation to the *Perſon*, and the *perſonal character* of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as we have it from his *own mouth*, which ſurely muſt be our beſt guide, with reſpect to the preſent queſtion. So that, we are not required to believe any thing concerning his *nature* or *eſſence*, much leſs that he is the *ſupreme God*, or *equal* to him; but only that he is the *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, the *Son*, and *ſent of God*, and that the good news is *true*, which he is the meſſenger of: conſequently, whoever believes in him *as ſuch*, and *ſubmits* to his government, and is *faithful unto death*, ſuch an one is a *true chriſtian*, whom Chriſt will own and approve, when he ſhall come to judge the world.

TRACT

TRACT IV.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning PROPERTY, wherein is conſidered *Liberty of Conſcience.*

BEFORE I enter upon this enquiry, I think it proper to premiſe, that as magiſtracy, or the exerciſe of a regular government in human ſociety is the *ordinance of God*; ſo the great and main end of government is the *good* and *happineſs* of the *ſociety* in which it is exerciſed, by being a ſecurity to every one's property, and a keeping every one in the quiet poſſeſſion of his own; conſequently, magiſtrates or governours can have no *right* to *invade* that which the nature and end of their office oblige them to *ſecure*. This being premiſed, I obſerve, that property is *originally* God's peculiar; becauſe God hath a *ſole property* in every thing which he is the original ſupreme cauſe of, and that is every thing without himſelf; ſo that we have no property, with reſpect to God, whatever we are, and whatever we have derived from, and dependent upon him: and therefore when I ſpeak of property, I mean that right and property which creatures have, with relation to one another. Property, with reſpect to men, is either *natural* or *obtained*. By natural, I mean ſuch property as we are born into, and which takes place with our very being, which is founded in the *nature* and *reaſon* of things, and ſo is independent of the will of all creatures. Thus for example, every man has a *natural right* to

to *life*, till the giver thereof ſhall be pleaſed to take it from him. Now, this is a property which is independent of the will of all creatures, being founded in the nature and reaſon of things, and takes place with our very being. We no ſooner begin to live, but we have a natural right to enjoy our life, ſo long as God, the giver, ſhall be pleaſed to continue it to us, except we forfeit that right. And whoſoever invades this natural property is guilty of a great injuſtice. Obtained property is ſuch as is not founded in nature, but depends upon *induſtry*, *natural contract*, *free gift*, or ſome other like cauſe. Thus, for example, if a man ſhould agree with a ſervant to have his labour for a year, the ſervant's labour, for that time, becomes the maſter's property; not from any natural right that he hath to another man's labour, but from that compact and agreement between the maſter and the ſervant, in which compact, he that had the natural right to that labour conveyed it to him whoſe ſervant he hath put himſelf to be.

And as property is thus diſtinguiſhed into ſorts, *viz.* original, natural, and obtained, ſo I think the *degrees* of property in theſe (if I may ſo ſpeak) are in one greater than another; that is, the original property which God hath in all things is *greater* than that natural or obtained property, which creatures have in any thing they are poſſeſſed of; and the natural property which any creature hath in any thing is greater than any obtained property whatever: conſequently, it muſt be a greater crime in any one to invade the natural than the obtained property of another, and it muſt be yet a greater crime to invade the original property of God than the natural or obtained property of any creature.

Again, the *ſubject* of property may be greater or leſs, tho' the property it ſelf, or right to enjoy it,

it, may be equally the ſame. Thus, a man may have two eſtates, one of twenty pounds *per annum*, and the other of an hundred; and his *title* or right to enjoy may be equally the ſame, as to both. He has as great a right, and as juſt a title (and ſo in that reſpect as great a property) in the leſſer as in the greater eſtate; and yet it would be a much greater wrong to him, and conſequently a much greater crime to have his property invaded in the greater than in the leſſer, becauſe of the much greater advantage he reaps by it, tho' his right to enjoy them is equally the ſame.

Seeing then the great end of government is the good and happineſs of the ſociety in which it is exerciſed, by ſecuring to every one his property, and keeping every one in the quiet poſſeſſion of his own, it will follow from hence, *firſt*, that the *non-proviſion* for the ſecurity of any property in any government, is a *defect* in that government; and the greater that property is (whether with reſpect to it ſelf, or with reſpect to its ſubject) which is non-ſecured, the greater is the defect and imperfection of that government. *Secondly*, if any government ſhould be ſo far from defending any property, whether natural or obtained, as that it actually *invades* that property which it ſhould ſecure, this would be a crime in that government; and the greater that property is which is invaded (whether with reſpect to itſelf, or with reſpect to its ſubject) the greater and more heinous would the crime of that government be. Thus, for example, it hath pleaſed God to make man a free accountable creature, by planting in him an underſtanding heart, in the uſe and exerciſe of which he is made capable of examining and judging of the agreement or diſagreement, of the fitneſs or unfitneſs, of the good or evil, and of the truth or falſeneſs of things, and of determining

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and directing his practice accordingly. Man being placed in such a state, it is not only his duty to examine and judge what is truth, and what is error, in all those cases wherein any branch of his duty or interest is concerned, and to determine his practice accordingly; I say, it is not only his duty thus to do, but it is also his *just right* and natural property in all cases whatever, so far as he is capable of such an examination and judgment, except his liberty is restrained by the principles of natural or revealed religion, such as the examining and judging of other men's *faults*. And as it is every man's natural right to examine and judge for himself, in all those cases wherein he is capable of so doing, and not to be determined in his judgment by the examination and judgment of other men; so it is the duty and business of government not only to permit and tolerate the society committed to its care, in the use and exercise of this their undoubted right, but also to *defend* and *guard* them from the insults and reproaches, the injuries and wrongs that any should attempt to afflict them with upon this account, and to *secure* them in the enjoyment of this their natural property. But if governours should be so far from securing, or even tolerating the society in the enjoyment of the aforesaid natural property, that on the contrary they set up a scheme of principles and opinions as the *standard* of the society's judgment, and require the members of that society to *submit* their *judgments* to that standard, forbidding them to embrace any principle or opinion which is contrary thereunto, and so prevent every one from examining and judging for himself, and persecute those that do; this is such a notorious invasion of the property of the society as is highly criminal in any government, and has been as fatal in its consequences as the invasion of any property

whatſoever, as ſad experience hath made manifeſt, Governours invading this particular natural right of men's examining and judging for themſelves, has been the *original ſpring* and *fountain* from whence have flowed all thoſe cruel and lamentable barbarities of impriſonment and baniſhment, burnings and maſſecres, wars and bloodſhed, confiſcating of goods, laying cities and countries waſte, and all the miſeries that attend it: I ſay, all theſe that have been practiſed by the chriſtian world, upon the account of religion, have been cauſed by governours invading the aforeſaid natural property of their people.

If it ſhould be objected, that the allowing all men a liberty to examine and judge for themſelves, as aforeſaid, has a tendency to *pervert* men's minds, by opening a door to all ſorts of *errors* and *hereſies*; and therefore ſuch a liberty ought to be *reſtrained*, by obliging all ſocieties to ſubmit their judgments to the judgment of thoſe to whoſe care and government they are committed, who are ſuppoſed to be better qualified to examine and judge for them, than they are for themſelves.

Anſwer, *firſt*, that governours are better qualified to examine and judge what is truth, and what is error, than thoſe ſocieties committed to their care, is not *always* true in fact; but ſuppoſing it were, yet ſtill every man muſt examine and judge for himſelf, becauſe every man is *accountable* for himſelf, and muſt anſwer for his own opinions and actions at the day of judgment; no man being there *ſubſtituted* to anſwer, or to be puniſhed or rewarded for another man's actions, any farther then he hath been an *acceſſory* in thoſe actions; and in that caſe he anſwers only for that part which he was an acceſſory in, and the acter himſelf muſt give an account for all the part he bore in thoſe acts.

Anſwer,

Anſwer, *ſecondly*, that men's enjoying their right and property, in examining and judging for themſelves, has a tendency to pervert men's minds is not true; becauſe examination is a *friend* and not an *enemy* to truth. Error and falſhood are what will not abide examination; and therefore they fly from it, and ſeek to human laws for ſanctuary and propagation. How many errors are there in the *Church* of *Rome*, which probably would ſoon vaniſh, were they not defended and propagated by human laws? whereas truth loves the light, and comes to the light, and ſubmits herſelf to every man's examination. Truth will bear examination, and *thrives* by it, and never ſuffers more than when ſhe is ſurrounded with darkneſs. Truth is beſt guarded and propagated by free examination, and has no need or propagation by human laws, becauſe ſhe can better recommend herſelf without them; and therefore the allowing all men a liberty to examine and judge for themſelves, has not a tendency, in itſelf to pervert men's minds, as the objection ſuppoſes.

Anſwer, *thirdly*, allowing that ſuch a liberty opens a door to all ſorts of errors, as the objection ſets forth, yet it does not follow that therefore it ought to be taken away; it being very unreaſonable and unjuſt to infer, that becauſe *ſome men* have miſapplied and abuſed their property, therefore all property muſt be taken away; ſuch kind of reaſoning as this would deprive all mankind of every *priviledge* and *comfort* they enjoy, yea, even of *life* it ſelf; to allow men the uſe of ſpeech, opens a door to *lying*, *perjury*, *ſlander*, *blaſphemy*, and a multitude of other diſorders of the tongue; and therefore 'tis neceſſary (according to this ſort of reaſoning) that the uſe of ſpeech ſhould be taken away from ſociety. Eating and drinking opens a door to *gluttony* and *drunkenneſs*, to *riots* and *diſor-*

ders, and a great many evil things; and therefore eating and drinking ought to be allowed only to thoſe who are the governours of ſociety, who are ſuppoſed to have a better command of their appetites than to abuſe their liberty, as aforeſaid. But ſuch kind of reaſoning as this is monſtrous. Every man ought to be *ſecure* in the enjoyment of his property, and if men, at any time, abuſe their liberty, they are accountable to God for that abuſe; and ſo far as ſuch an abuſe *affects* the *ſociety* to which they belong, ſo far they are accountable for it to that ſociety. And therefore, ſuppoſing that a man ſhould ſo far miſapply his property in the preſent caſe, as to draw any *wrong* concluſions in his reaſoning upon any ſubject, and ſhould be led into an *error* hereby, and ſhould likewiſe propoſe that error as a *truth* to others, together with the *grounds* and *reaſons* upon which he aſſents to it, in ſuch a caſe, he ought, in reaſon, not only to be *tolerated* herein, but alſo to be *protected* and *ſecured* in the uſe of this his natural property (provided he is not injurious to the perſonal character or property of others, or the common rights of mankind) becauſe truth is what every man has an *equal right* to, and *intereſt* in, and what every man has a natural right to be an *advocate* for; and therefore every man ought in reaſon to be *ſecure*, both in his enquiries after truth, and in his offering his arguments and reaſons for what he judges to be ſo: and tho' he *miſtakes* herein, he ought not to be perſecuted for his error, but to be *protected* in the enjoyment of his property. If his error leads him to practice that which is hurtful to ſociety, then the government is to *reſtrain* and keep him from ſuch practices; and as this is a *ſecuring* the property of others, which he would invade, ſo it is not an invaſion of his property, becauſe no man hath a right and property to invade the

the right and property of others, tho' he ſhould be never ſtrongly perſuaded that he has; his error makes no alteration in the caſe: and therefore, tho' he is to be protected in his examining and judging for himſelf, and tho' he ought to determine his practice from his own, and not from other men's judgments of things, yet he is not to be protected in, but *prevented* from invading the right and property of others.

Again, As man is made a free accountable creature, and as he is accountable to God, who is the author of his being, and as his happineſs or miſery depend upon the *good* or *bad* uſe he makes of his *liberty*, in his approving or diſapproving himſelf to God, and as it is his natural underived right to examine and judge for himſelf, what is truth, and what is error in every caſe, except his liberty be reſtrained, either by the light of nature, or divine revelation; ſo it is his natural right to chuſe for himſelf that way and method of ſerving God, and recommending himſelf to his favour which, upon a thorough examination, appears to him to be moſt agreeable to God's will (which we commonly call *religion*) I ſay, that it is the natural and underived right of every man to chuſe his own religion, becauſe his own *eternal happineſs* or *miſery* depend upon that choice. This is as much his natural right, as his right to his *natural life*. This is a right that he can never *forfeit*, as he may ſome other natural rights. The naturl right to life may be forfeited, as he that invades the life of his neighbour forfeits his own life, to the ſociety to which he belongs. *Gen.* ix 6. *He that ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed*; but a man's right to chuſe his own religion, is what he can never forfeit; and as this is the natural right of every man, ſo it is the buſineſs of government, not only to tolerate, but to keep every man in the

quiet poſſeſſion of this his natural property, and to defend and guard him from every injury which he is liable to, in the uſe and enjoyment of it. So likewiſe on the other ſide, if governours ſhould be ſo far from ſecuring the people, committed to their care, in the enjoyment of this their natural property, that on the contrary they chuſe a religion for their people, and require them to ſubmit to their choice, and perſecute thoſe that do not; this is a very great invaſion of men's natural property, and is highly criminal in any government, and has moſt fatal conſequences attending it; becauſe if a *falſe religion* happens to be *eſtabliſhed*, it is propagated as far as the power of the eſtabliſhers can extend it, and is continued down from generation to generation.

If it ſhould be objected, *firſt*, that ſuch liberty would throw all things into *confuſion*, by opening a door to *ſchiſm* and *faction*, and therefore ſuch a liberty ought not to be allowed. *Anſwer*, The aforeſaid liberty hath no ſuch tendency, becauſe ſuch a liberty is a *friend*, and not an *enemy* to *peace* and *unity*; there is nothing in the nature of the thing which can more tend to the peace and unity of any ſociety, nor to the ſecurity of any government, than for every one of that ſociety to have the free uſe and enjoyment of all their rights and properties, and to be ſecured from every invader; whereas on the other ſide, when men's rights and properties are invaded, it is very difficult for them to be *eaſy* under ſuch *oppreſſions*, and this lays a foundation for *ſchiſm* and *faction*; and tho' to avoid the perſecution which attends refuſing to ſubmit to the eſtabliſhed religion, men do play the *hypocrite* for a time; yet when time and opportunity ſerve, they are apt to caſt off the *yoke* from their neck, and that often proves very fatal both to the governours and to the ſociety. But allowing what

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the objection ſuppoſes, *viz.* that ſchiſm and faction may be occaſioned by ſuch a liberty, yet it does not follow that men's natural right ought to be taken away, becauſe ſome men have abuſed that right, as I have already ſhewn.

If it ſhould farther be objected, *ſecondly*, that the allowing men to chuſe their own religion leaves men at liberty to be of *no religion*, and conſequently to be *atheiſts*, or *deiſts*, or what they pleaſe, than which nothing can be more deſtructive to human ſociety; becauſe atheiſm and infidelity take away all *conſciouſneſs* of *vertue* and *vice*, which are the great ſupports of ſociety. Seeing then that the conſciouſneſs of vertue and vice has a dependence upon the belief of a God, and the true religion; and ſeeing the non-conſciouſneſs of vertue and vice are deſtructive of human ſociety, it will follow, that the magiſtrates care, for the welfare of the ſociety, obliges them not to tolerate, but to *expel* atheiſm and infidelity out of their dominions, and to oblige their people to the belief of a *God*, and to the practice of *true religion*.

I anſwer, the belief of a *God*, a *providence*, and a *judgment* to come, does not *neceſſarily* make men *vertuous*, and thereby beneficial to ſociety; and a *want* of *faith*, with reſpect to theſe, does not *neceſſarily* make men *vicious*, and thereby hurtful to it; theſe having no neceſſary connection with, or dependence upon each other. However, that the belief of the forementiond propoſitions may have an influence on men's preſent behaviour, and as ſuch it may be beneficial to ſociety, I think muſt be allowed, and conſequently that it is the duty of governours, to make uſe of the moſt proper means to expel atheiſm and infidelity out of their dominions; but that the taking away men's liberty in chuſing their own religion, and obliging them, by puniſhment and perſecution, to embrace the

religion of their governours, is *ſuch a proper means*; this I think may juſtly be *denied*. For ſuppoſing a man be an atheiſt or deiſt in principle, human laws, with their puniſhments, have not a tendency, in the nature of the thing, to work ſuch a man's *conviction*, but on the contrary they tend to *harden* and *confirm* him in his infidelity; becauſe human puniſhments have nothing of reaſon or argument in them, which are proper to work upon men's judgments, and therefore they are not a proper means to work the coviction of an unbeliver. Indeed they carry a terror along with them, and this works upon men's *fears*, and ſo they become a proper means to reſtrain men's *diſorderly appetites*, and *paſſions*. The fear of human puniſhment oftentimes reſtrains men, where reaſon and argument do not. Suppoſe a man was ſo covetous, that the principles of religion were not ſufficient to reſtrain him from robbing his neighbour; yet the thoughts of an *halter* might. But ſuppoſing a man to be an atheiſt, can any perſon be ſo weak as to think that the thoughts of an halter or a ſtake would convince him that there is a *God*? no; ſuch a conviction muſt be wrought by reaſon and argument, which human puniſhment is deſtitute of; conſequently ſuch puniſhment is not a *proper means* to expel atheiſm and infidelity; nay, it is ſo far from it, that it rather tends to harden and confirm men in their errors; for he that is perſecuted for his opinion. is naturally led to conclude that his perſecutors make uſe of this method of force, becauſe they are deſtitute of reaſon and argument, and becauſe their cauſe cannot be ſupported, if left to ſtand or fall by it, and from hence he infers, that he is in the right; and men generally uſe this as an argument of the goodneſs of their cauſe, becauſe, ſay they, truth was always perſecuted; and when men have a bad cauſe,

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which will not bear reaſon and argument, then they ſupply what is wanting of argument by *force* and *violence*. Indeed, puniſhment may make men *conceal* their opinions and principles, but they are never the more expelled by being concealed. An atheiſt is an atheiſt, whether he makes a publick profeſſion of his principles or not. Beſides, the forcing men to conceal their principles, in this caſe, is more hurtful than beneficial to ſociety; becauſe it naturally produces *hypocriſy*, which is the moſt prejudicial to ſociety of any vice whatſoever; for as an atheiſt has no expectation of a future reckoning, ſo he can, with the greateſt freedom, be guilty of the greateſt hypocriſy; and therefore whenever atheiſm is puniſhable by human laws, the atheiſt can (and will to ſerve his worldly intereſt) put on the appearance of the moſt ſtrict chriſtian; and this profeſſion puts it into his power to do a great deal of hurt to thoſe whom chriſtian charity diſpoſes to think him to be in reality what he is in appearance, whereas if he had been left free in his profeſſion, he would have *wanted one* (and perhaps the ſtrongeſt) *temptation* to be an hypocrite. It is much ſafer dealing with a *profeſſed* atheiſt than with a *concealed* one; becauſe with the *firſt*, we watch and guard againſt the damage that we may be capable of receiving by him; but with the *latter*, who paſſes under the covert of a chriſtian, we are not apprized of our danger; and therefore men are often taken in the ſnare before they are aware. From which it appears, that the puniſhment of *atheiſm* itſelf is diſadvantageous to ſociety, and is rather a means to confirm the atheiſt in, than to convince him of his error. And tho' no man has a right to *trifle* with, or *banter*, and *ridicule religion*; yet every man has a right to be heard, when he ſpeaks *pertinently*, *ſoberly*, and *ſeriouſly*; and there can be no greater re-

reflection upon chriſtianity, than for its profeſſors not to give their adverſaries *fair play*. *Firſt*, to bind, and then to *buffet them*, is not fair fighting with, and conquering of, but *trampling* upon an adverſary, and yet this is the caſe. Chriſtian firſt ſtop unbeleivers mouths by *human laws*, and then inſult them as *vanquiſhed enemies*. Chriſtianity is not ſo weak and indefenſible as this practice ſuppoſes it to be; for when force and perſecution were engaged againſt chriſtianity, and it had no other weapons to fight with but reaſon and good argument, then it prevailed to the converting of the world: but now that reaſon is made to take the lower ground, and force and violence to take place of it, infidelity prevails. Reaſon and argument are like the two hands of *Moſes*, when they are lifted up, *Iſrael prevails*; but when they are made to give place to violence and force, then *Amalek prevails*. Oh, that our *Aaron* and *Hur* would hold up theſe hands of *Moſes!* then ſhould our *Iſrael* prevail, to the utter deſtruction of the *Amalekites*. Chriſtianity hath ſtrength ſufficient to deal with its adverſaries when they ſtand upon even ground; Why then ſhould chriſtians act the part of *cowards*, in taking ſo unmanly an advantage of their oppoſers? not that 'tis a real advantage to the cauſe of chriſtianity, that *infidelity* is *perſecuted*; nay, in this lies its adverſaries great ſtrength, becauſe this gives them occaſion and opportunity of boaſting to the world, that they have what they really have not, *viz.* that they have ſtrength of argument on their ſide, but are prohibited the uſe of it; that chriſtianity's beſt defence is human laws; and that if they ſtood upon an equal foot, they ſhould come off with victory. this advantage they take to perſwade people that truth is on their ſide. If therefore magiſtrates would *expel* atheiſm and in-

infidelity out of their dominions, the only means to effect it, is to allow them to propoſe their opinions, and their arguments and reaſons for thoſe opinions, with the utmoſt freedom: and as this would ſet the diſpute upon an equal foot, without any advantage to either party, ſo it would give men, of underſtanding and judgment, an occaſion and opportunity of examining the arguments offered on the infidels ſide, and of ſhewing the *weakneſs* and *inconcluſiveneſs* of them, and conſequently of working their conviction, or at leaſt it would ſtop their mouths, and prevent the ſpreading of infidelity.

If it ſhould be farther objected, *thirdly*, that the good Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah* made laws for the eſtabliſhing of the *Jewiſh religion*; and that it was foretold by the Propheth *Iſaiah* of the chriſtian church, that *kings ſhould be her nurſing fathers, and queens her nurſing mothers*, as in *Iſaiah* xlix. 23.

Anſwer, That the good Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah* made laws for the puniſhment of evil doers, and for the protecting and defending of good people in the practice of their duty, is no more than what their office called for; but that they *compelled* people to the profeſſion of the *Jewiſh* religion, which were contrary-minded (which is the caſe under conſideration) is more eaſily taken for granted than proved. But ſuppoſing they did, this is no good argument to prove that it ought to be, becauſe they practiſed it; for if the rule of what ought to be, ſhould be taken from what good men have practiſed, as this rule would be very uncertain, in itſelf, ſo it would oblige us to practiſe the worſt of actions. As to what the Prophet *Iſaiah* foretold, that *kings* ſhould be

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nurſing fathers, and *queens nurſing mothers* to the *Chriſtian church*, this cannot, in reaſon, be ſuppoſed to intend any more than that kings and queens ſhould take Chriſt's people into their protection; and defend and ſecure them, even as a nurſe doth her child, from every evil that they are expoſed to, upon the account of their profeſſion; but it will not follow from hence, that they were to make men chriſtians by *force* and *violence*, or to deſtroy the *common rights of mankind*.

TRACT

TRACT V.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning SIN, in which is conſidered *Original Sin.*

THIS enquiry is threefold; *firſt*, what ſin is. *Secondly*, who are guilty of it, ſo as to be properly called ſinners. *Thirdly*, whether one perſon may be guilty of the ſin which is actually committed in and by the perſon of another.

Firſt, To uſe St. *John*'s definition, as in 1 *John* iii. 4. *Sin is the tranſgreſſion of the law*; or to expreſs it more fully, ſin is an irregular, diſorderly, wicked act, either of the mind ſingly, or of the mind and practice in conjunction; by which a perſon chuſes to do what in reaſon and juſtice he ought not, or chuſes to avoid what in reaſon and juſtice he ought to do.

Secondly, Such, and ſuch only, are guilty of ſin, ſo as to be properly called ſinners, who *tranſgreſs* the *law*; or who chuſe to do, or to avoid doing, as aforeſaid.

Thirdly, When any perſon, by adviſing, approving of, conſenting to, or not uſing his endeavour to prevent the ſin committed by another; or any other way makes himſelf an *acceſſory* to another's crime, either before or after the fact, ſuch a perſon may, in ſome ſenſe, be ſaid to be guilty of the ſin which is committed in and by the perſon of another, becauſe he becomes a *partner* with

with the criminal in his folly. Not, but properly ſpeaking, every one in this caſe is guilty only of the part *he bore* in, or contributed to the ſin committed; and is not guilty of the part which others bore in, or contributed towards it. Thus, if one man *adviſes* another to murder his neighbour, and another *approves* of, and juſtifies the fact, after it is committed, the latter, in this caſe, will not be guilty of adviſing to, nor of actually committing the murder, but only of *juſtifying* and *approving* it, when done; which was the part he bore in this wickedneſs.

If it be aſked, may not one perſon be guilty of another's ſin, except he is ſome way or other acceſſory to it? I anſwer, he cannot; for as guilt ariſes from the irregularity and wickedneſs of the act to which it cleaves, ſo it cannot, in the nature of the thing, extend itſelf any farther than to the *perſonal actor*, and to all thoſe that are ſome way or other, in ſome kind or degree, *acceſſory* to it; for as it is altogether unreaſonable, and unjuſt, to *charge* that upon a perſon which he did not act, nor was any way acceſſory to, ſo there can be no ſuch thing in nature as a perſon to be guilty of a crime which was wholly out of his power to prevent, which he never conſented to, or approved of, nor was any way acceſſory to, either before or after the fact.

Objection, Tho' in the nature of the thing the guilt of any act can extend no farther than the actor, and thoſe who are ſome way or other acceſſory to it, yet as God is an abſolute and uncontroulable Being, who can diſpoſe of his creatures as he liſts, ſo he can *impute* the guilt of one perſon's acts to another, tho' the perſon he imputes it to be no way acceſſory to that act. Thus God imputes the guilt of *Adam*'s *ſin* to all his poſterity, tho' they were no way acceſſory to his crime.

Anſwer,

Anſwer, Tho' God is abſolute and uncontroulable with relation to his creatures, and in that reſpect can do with them as he liſts, yet he is not ſo with relation to himſelf; becauſe he is influenced and governed by thoſe divine perfections of *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, *truth* and *righteouſneſs*, which dwell everlaſtingly in him. And tho' God is under no reſtraint, with reſpect to any thing without himſelf, yet he is ſo far reſtrained (in all his dealings with his creatures) by the *moral rectitude* of his nature, as that he never *will* act contrary to the principles of wiſdom, goodneſs, truth, and juſtice; and conſequently, to ſay that he imputes the ſin of one perſon to another, which was in no reſpect acceſſory thereto, is to impute *unrighteouſneſs* and *iniquity* to the *moſt holy God*; than which there can be no greater *ſlander* or *defamation*. That to impute ſin, as aforeſaid, is contrary to the principles of juſtice and equity is manifeſt, not only from the nature and reaſon of the thing, but alſo from the *teſtimony of God*, who hath declared it to be ſo, in his holy word, as in *Ezek.* xviii. where, when God, by his prophet, had aſſured the people of *Iſrael* that as all ſouls were his, ſo the ſoul that ſinned ſhould die; and that if a good man had an evil ſon, the ſon only, and not the father, ſhould be chargeable with the guilt of his actions, and the like of a wicked father and a good ſon; and that *the father ſhould not bear the iniquity of the ſon, nor the ſon the iniquity of the father*; *but that the righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked upon him:* he then appeals to the judgment of thoſe very *Iſraelites* who complained of the iniquity of his dealings with them, whether he did not govern himſelf in this reſpect by the principles of juſtice and equity, as at *verſe* 25, 29. *Hear now, O houſe of* Iſrael, *are not my ways equal?* From hence

hence I infer, that as the charging every man's ſins upon *himſelf*, and not upon another, was juſt and equal in God's account, ſo the contrary to this, *viz.* the charging or imputing one man's ſin to another, that was no way acceſſory thereto, is unequal and unjuſt in his account alſo. And as God declared, by the mouth of his prophet, that he would deal equally with his creatures in this reſpect, by charging the guilt of every man's ſin upon himſelf, and not upon another; ſo whoever aſſerts otherwiſe of God, is guilty of ſlander and falſe accuſation againſt the moſt High; conſequently God will not impute *Adam*'s *ſin* to his *poſterity*.

If it ſhould be here replied, that tho' this is true with reſpect to *actual*, yet it is not ſo with reſpect to *original ſin*. Every common father ſhall be chargeable only with the guilt of his own ſin; but *Adam* was more than a common father, he being the *head* and *repreſentative* of *all mankind*, and therefore the guilt of this his ſin is chargeable upon all his poſterity. *Anſwer*, if by original ſin is here meant the *ſin of* Adam *in eating the forbidden fruit*, this was as much an *actual* ſin as any that hath been committed by any other man; and God is as much obliged, by the rectitude of his nature, to deal equally in charging the guilt of this ſin upon no other than him that actually committed it, and thoſe that were ſome way or other acceſſory to that crime, as he is obliged to deal ſo with all other ſins and ſinners. And if we conſider *Adam* as a head and repreſentative to his poſterity, it makes no alteration in the caſe, becauſe it was not his poſterity, but *almighty God* which conſtituted that relation, and therefore his poſterity ought not, in juſtice, to be *ſufferers* by it. If the body of mankind had choſen *Adam* to be their *head*, and had given him power and authority

thority to act in their ſtead, and had undertook to be accountable for all he did, then indeed they had been juſtly chargeable with his fault; but when he is made their head by another, with their conſent, and acts without their appointment, his fault cannot with any colour of juſtice and equity be charged upon them. How unequal muſt it be for us to be chargeable with that guilt which was contracted five thouſand years before we were born?

If it ſhould be farther replied, upon this ſuppoſition, that it is unjuſt in God to impute the ſin of one perſon to another, which is no way acceſſory to it, then God ſtands convicted of *injuſtice* in his *own word*, inaſmuch as he is there repreſented as *puniſhing* with *death* all mankind for *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, and that he deſtroyed the *innocent babes* of the old world by the flood, and thoſe of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* by fire from heaven, not only with, but for the ſin of their wicked parents; and his dealing thus hardly with the *children* in the *Babyloniſh* captivity gave occaſion for the uſe of that proverb in *Iſrael*, viz. *the fathers have eaten ſower grapes, and the children's teeth are ſet an edge*; as in *Ezek.* xviii. 2. Moreover, this was what God threatened he would do in the *ſecond commandment*, viz. *viſit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.*

Anſwer, As God is the original ſupreme cauſe of all things, and ſo is the original fountain of life, and of all other bleſſings and comforts which every creature enjoys; ſo the giving and continuing of life and of every other bleſſing is wholly of his free grace, and not what he is in juſtice obliged to, except he has any ways obliged himſelf by *promiſe* to them, which promiſe is alſo wholly of his *free grace*; ſo likewiſe he may give

and take away life, and every other bleſſing, when, and in what way, and by what inſtrument, and upon what motive he pleaſes, without the leaſt *injuſtice* to thoſe that he gives them to, and takes them from; becauſe he gives and takes but his own, and invades no one's right and property in ſo doing. This being ſo, I ſay, that tho' all mankind do *die*, becauſe *Adam tranſgreſſed God's command*, and tho' many *thouſand infants*, which could not diſcern between their right hand and their left, were drowned by the flood, and deſtroyed by fire from heaven, and carried captive into *Babylon*, not only with, but becauſe their wicked parents tranſgreſſed God's laws; yet in this God did not act unjuſtly, by imputing the guilt of the parents to the children, and puniſhing the innocent for the guilty's ſake; no, he only exerciſed his pleaſure in taking away thoſe bleſſings, which according to the principles of juſtice and equity, he might give and take, how, and whenſoever he pleaſed. And tho' the ſin of the parents was the occaſion of God's withdrawing thoſe bleſſings from the children, yet this, with reſpect to thoſe children, was not a *puniſhment* for, but only a *conſequence* of their parents folly. And tho' *Adam*'s ſin introduced death, and death paſſed upon all men, as a conſequence of his folly, yet it is ſo far from being to mankind a puniſhment for his ſin, that on the contrary ſometimes God haſtens it in tender mercy to the perſons on whom he inflicts it. Thus when he intended to viſit *Jeroboam*, and his houſe, for their wickedneſs, he firſt removed by death good *Abijah*, *becauſe in him there was found ſome good thing towards the Lord God of* Iſrael, *in the houſe of* Jeroboam; as in 1 *Kings* xiv. 12, 13. *Iſaiah* lvii. 1. *The righteous periſheth* (dieth) *and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away,*

away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken from the evil to come. Nay, even thoſe babes which were drowned by the flood, conſumed by fire, and carried captive into *Babylon*, tho' this was to them a conſequence of their parents, and others folly, yet even death and captivity were a *mercy* to them; becauſe as they were innocent, ſo they were *helpleſs*; and for them to have been left, when their parents were deſtroyed, or carried captive, would have put them into a ſtate, that as it would have been worſe, ſo it would, according to the natural courſe of things, have ended in *death*; and therefore the removing them, with their parents, was an act of mercy to them.

As to the *ſecond commandment*, I anſwer; if this was given as a law to *individuals*, conſidered as ſuch, and not conſidered as a people or nation, then the threatning to viſit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, refers only to *ſuch children* as *follow their parents example in ſin*, and ſo juſtify their practice, and conſequently become acceſſory to their crimes, and fill up the meaſure of their iniquity; but as for thoſe children that conſider and turn from their fathers folly, and cleave ſtedfaſtly unto God, they are not at all concerned in this threat; and therefore it is expreſſed in the command, that God will viſit upon thoſe that *hate him, and ſhew mercy unto thouſands of them that love him, and keep his commandments*: and thus it was made good in the idolatrous houſe of *Jeroboam*, thoſe of his children, which followed his example in ſin, came under the divine threat, and God executed his diſpleaſure upon them; but good *Abijah* was ſingled out from the reſt (tho' he was *Jeroboam*'s ſon) to be the object of God's love, *becauſe in him there was found ſome good thing towards the Lord God of* Iſrael, *in the houſe of* Jeroboam; as in 1 *Kings* xiv. 10---13. And thus this caſe is fairly ſtated in the afore-

ſaid 18th chapter of *Ezekiel*. But farther, I ſay, if the *ten commandments* were given the *children of Iſrael*, conſidered as a *people* or *nation* whom God had delivered out of the houſe of bondage, and had given them the land of *Canaan*, for an inheritance; then tho' every individual was obliged to keep thoſe laws, and was intereſted in the promiſes and threatenings which God had given, as the arguments and motives to their obedience, yet theſe promiſes and threats were intended and made good to them, conſidered as a *people*. Thus, the *fifth commandment* ſaith, *Honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee*. Theſe words St. *Paul* interprets to be a *promiſe*, and calls it *the firſt commandment with promiſe*; as in *Eph.* vi. 2. Now this promiſe was made good to them, not in every particular inſtance of obedience, but when they, as a *people*, were obedient, that is, when the generality of youth did honour or were obedient to their parents, then they came under this gracious promiſe of living long in the land of *Canaan*, which the Lord their God had given them for a poſſeſſion; but as to every particular inſtance of ſuch obedience, the truth and juſtice of God was not engaged to make good this promiſe thereon, becauſe it was given to them as a people; and therefore thoſe good youths, *Daniel*, *Shadrach*, *Meſhach*, and *Abednego*, tho' we have reaſon to hope that they made conſcience of this, as well as of the reſt of God's laws, yet they were not kept to live long in *Canaan*, but were carried captive into *Babylon*. So in like manner the threatening in the *ſecond commandment* was given to them, conſidered as a people, that when they, as a people, or nation, did revolt from God, and ſet up another god to ſerve in his ſtead, then God would ſo manifeſt his diſpleaſure againſt them,

them, that the effects of that diſpleaſure ſhould *deſcend down to the third and fourth generation*. This was made good in the *Babyloniſh captivity*. So then, upon the whole, I ſay, that tho' God oftentimes ſo puniſhed the ſins of the parents, as that the effects of that puniſhment deſcended down upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation; and tho' the ſin of the parents may be an occaſion of God's withdrawing his bleſſing from their children; yet he never *imputes* the ſin of the parents to the children, nor puniſhes the children for their parents faults; and conſequently God hath not convicted himſelf of *injuſtice* in his *holy word*, as the objection repreſents him to have done.

If it ſhould be farther objected, ſuppoſing it contrary to the principles of juſtice and equity, to impute the guilt of one perſon's actions to another, who was no way acceſſory thereto, then *God* is chargeable with *iniquity*, or elſe St. *Paul* is chargeable with preaching *falſe doctrine* to the world; becauſe in his epiſtle to the *Romans*, he hath declared that ſin, and death, and condemnation have paſſed from *Adam* to all his poſterity, and conſequently to all thoſe who did never perſonally tranſgreſs. Thus in *chap.* v. 12. *As by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin; and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned*; and ſo on to the end of that chapter.

Before I return an anſwer to this objection, I obſerve, that as reaſon aſſures us that God is a *righteous* Being, and that he deals in all caſes with his creatures, upon the principles of juſtice and equity; ſo he hath likewiſe declared this of himſelf, and that his delight is to do ſo, and that this is a proper ground of glorying to his creatures; as in *Jeremiah* ix. 23, 24. *Thus ſaith the Lord, let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither*

let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciſeth loving-kindneſs, judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth; for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord. And as God has thus declared himſelf to be a righteous Being, ſo he hath likewiſe declared in the forementioned 18th chapter of *Ezekiel*, that to charge the guilt of every man's actions upon himſelf, and not upon another, is agreeable to theſe principles of juſtice and equity; and conſequently to charge the guilt of a perſon's actions upon another, that was no way acceſſory to his crime, is to act contrary to theſe principles.

This being obſerved, I anſwer, that if St. *Paul*, or an *angel* from heaven, ſhould preach ſuch a doctrine (as the objection ſuppoſes) as this would be a *falſhood* in itſelf, and would be charging the righteous God *fooliſhly*; ſo we ought not to receive it, nor give the leaſt degree of aſſent to it, *Gal.* i. 8. but farther, I ſay, we are under no neceſſity of bringing this caſe to ſo *deſperate* an iſſue, as to conclude, that either *God* is unjuſt, or elſe that St. *Paul* hath preached falſe doctrine to the world; becauſe if we treat St. *Paul*'s writings with the ſame civility, and give him the ſame allowances as we do to the writings of all other men, we ſhould ſee that St. *Paul* did not intend to eſtabliſh ſuch a doctrine, as the objection repreſents him to have done. For the clearing this point, and St. *Paul* from this reflection, I will give my ſenſe of what he hath ſaid in this matter, when I have premiſed, *firſt*, that as God puniſhed *Adam*'s ſin in eating the forbidden fruit with *death*; ſo death, or mortality, paſſed upon all his poſterity, as a *natural conſequence* of his ſin: I ſay, as a natural conſequence, becauſe as mortality was in-

flicted

flicted upon *Adam*, as a juſt puniſhment for his folly; ſo his ſeed naturally became mortal, as they were branches ſpringing out of a mortal ſtock. *Secondly*, I premiſe, that St. *Paul* was ſo far from ſuppoſing, that God acts contrary to the principles of juſtice and equity in his dealings with his creatures, that on the contrary, in this very epiſtle, he retorts back ſuch a ſuppoſition, with a *God forbid*; and intimates to the *Romans*, that if God was unrighteous he would be unfit to judge the world, as knowing that injuſtice and partiality were very unreaſonable in judgment. Thus in chap. iii. 5, 6. *Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? I ſpeak as a man, God forbid; for then how ſhall God judge the world?* Seeing therefore St. *Paul* takes it for granted, that God acts agreeable to the principles of juſtice and equity; and ſeeing that to impute the guilt of one perſon's actions to another, who was no ways acceſſory to his crime, is contrary to theſe principles, according to what God hath declared of this matter by his Prophet *Ezekiel*, which St. *Paul* could not be ignorant of; from hence, I infer, that if there is any ſenſe to be put upon his words, which is agreeable to *truth*, to the *deſign* for which they are urged, and to what the Apoſtle hath elſewhere more plainly expreſſed upon a *like occaſion*, we ought in juſtice to interpret his words in ſuch a ſenſe, and not in a ſenſe which is contrary thereto.

This being premiſed, I obſerve, that St. *Paul*, in the former part of this epiſtle (in order to take off the vain and groundleſs conceit of the *Jews*, who had monopolized the favour and love of God to themſelves; and to comfort the believing *Gentiles*, whom the *Jews* deſpiſed as reprobates) he largely and fully proved, that the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in the kingdom of the Meſſiah, ſtood all

upon a *level*, in point of acceptance in God's ſight, and that there was no room for boaſting on either ſide; becauſe as the *Gentiles* had ſinned againſt the light of nature, ſo had the *Jews* alſo againſt the law of *Moſes*, conſequently they were all concluded under ſin. And as they were all ſinners, ſo their juſtification, or freedom from condemnation, was an act of *grace*, and not of debt. It was what God's goodneſs and mercy was pleaſed to beſtow, and not what he in ſtrict juſtice was obliged to. And as their juſtification was an act of grace, and not of debt; ſo the pre-requiſites, or that which made them the ſuitable objects of this grace of juſtification, was faith in and faithfulneſs to the Meſſiah, whom God hath appointed to be the miniſter of this grace, both to *Jew* and *Gentile*. And as God had given his Son to promote the welfare of mankind; ſo this was a convincing proof of the greatneſs and truth of his love, and was a proper ground of hope that he would be every way a ſuitable good unto them.

The Apoſtle having ſhewn at large, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* ſtood upon a level, in point of acceptance in God's ſight, and that the *Gentiles* had the ſame ground of glory, and of hope as the *Jews*, foraſmuch as God was the God of the *Gentites* as well as of the *Jews*, he farther illuſtrates this point (in the verſes from whence the objection is taken) by ſhewing, that as *Adam* was the *common father* of *Jew* and *Gentile*, and as his diſobedience affected them both, by bringing *mortality* upon his poſterity; ſo *Chriſt* was given of God to be a *great* and *univerſal* benefit to mankind, by raiſing all men from that death, which *Adam*'s ſin had ſubjected them to, and ſo bringing them again into a ſtate of life. Thus in *chap.* v 12. *Wherefore, as by one man* (Adam) *ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, and ſo death paſſed upon all men,*

for

for that all have ſinned (are become mortal) that by the term *ſinned*, is meant mortality (the cauſe being put for the effect) is plain, not only from the parallel place, 1 *Cor.* xv. 22. where St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of the ſame thing, ſaith, *as in* Adam *all die*, that is, become mortal, for that they actually died in *Adam* was not true; but it was true that in him they became mortal, or at leaſt the Apoſtle judged that to be the caſe, as in *verſe* 21. *For ſince by man (viz.* Adam*) came death*, or morality, *by man (viz.* Chriſt*) came alſo the reſurrection from the dead:* I ſay, it is not only clear from the parallel place in *Corinthians*, but alſo from St. *Paul*'s diſcourſe in this very place: thus, *verſe* 15. *For if through the offence of one (viz.* Adam*) many be dead*; here we ſee that it is death, and not ſin, which the Apoſtle ſaith many fell under by *Adam*'s offence, and this is what he undertakes to prove in the 13th and 14th verſes, as will appear by and by. And that the *cauſe* is put for the *effect* ſometimes in this very caſe, ſee *Gen.* vii. 4. *If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted; but if thou doſt not well, ſin* (or the effect of ſin, which is puniſhment) *lieth at the door.* As the being accepted of God, was the effect of *Abel*'s well doing; of the being rejected by him, was the effect or puniſhment of *Cain*'s evil doing. Now for *Cain* to do evil, was the ſame thing as to commit ſin, ſin and evil in this caſe being the ſame thing; and therefore, that which lay at the door, or followed his doing evil, was not ſin, but the effect or puniſhment of ſin; and yet God (or the angel which ſpake in God's name to *Cain*) calls it ſin, putting the cauſe for the effect. So in like manner the Apoſtles puts the term *ſin*, which was the cauſe, for mortality, which was the effect. That all men have ſinned in *Adam* was not true (as I have ſhewn) but that all men became mortal by his

his ſin, was true, or at leaſt the Apoſtle judged that to be the caſe (as I have ſhewn likewiſe.) What a *hardſhip* therefore muſt it be to the Apoſtle, for us to interpret his words in a ſenſe, contrary to the ſenſe which he himſelf gives them in this, and in a parallel place of his writings. And the hardſhip will be yet greater in denying him the liberty of putting the cauſe for the effect, when God had done the ſame in the uſe of the very ſame term, as is before ſhewn.

If it ſhould be here replied, that it ſeems a little ſtrange that St, *Paul* ſhould uſe the ſame term in *two different* ſenſes in the ſame verſe. I anſwer, it ſeems more ſtrange, that he ſhould aſſert that which was contrary to truth, and which no way anſwered his preſent deſign; for to aſſert that death paſſed upon all men, as an effect or conſequence of their own ſin, as this was not true, ſo it was beſide his preſent purpoſe; which was to ſhew, not what was the effect of all men's ſin, but on the contrary what was the effect of *Adam*'s *ſin only*. Verſe 13, 14. *For until the law, ſin was in the world; but ſin is not imputed where there is no law: Nevertheleſs death reigned from* Adam *to* Moſes, *even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of* Adam's *tranſgreſſion.* Here in the 13th verſe the Apoſtle (according to the plain and moſt obvious ſignification of the words) ſuppoſes and allows three things. *Firſt*, That from *Adam* to *Moſes*, there was no law; this is fully implied in thoſe words [until the law] which naturally ſuppoſes that, antecedent to that time, there was no law; and in thoſe words [where there is no law] which ſuppoſes that there was no law in being at the time referred to. *Secondly*, He allows that ſin was committed all that ſpace of time from *Adam* down to *Moſes*: this is expreſſed in thoſe words, *for until the law, ſin was in the world. Thirdly*, He allows that there can be no guilt contracted

tracted where there is no law; this is expreſſed in thoſe words, *but ſin is not imputed where there is no law.* Now in his allowing theſe three points, he is guilty of a flat contradiction; for if there is no guilt contracted when there is no law, and if there was no law in being from *Adam* to *Moſes*, then it will neceſſarily follow that there could be no guilt contracted in that ſpace of time, and yet the Apoſtle expreſsly aſſerts, that until the law, ſin was in the world: this puts us under a neceſſity of finding out ſuch a ſenſe of theſe words as will make St. *Paul* conſiſtent with *truth*, and with *himſelf*, *viz.* by the term *law*, in the firſt part of the verſe, he means the law given by *Moſes*, as appears from the next verſe, in which he ſaith, nevertheleſs death reigned from *Adam* to *Moſes*; where the term *nevertheleſs* ſuppoſes that *death* prevailed at the ſame time in which he had declared *ſin* had prevailed, as in the precedent verſe, *viz.* till the law. So that till the law, and from *Adam* to *Moſes*, is the ſame thing in the ſenſe of the *Apoſtle*. By the term *law*, in the latter part of the verſe, he means ſuch a law as had *death* fixed to it as its *ſanction*; ſuch was the law given to *Adam*, which forbad the eating of the tree of knowledge upon pain of death. By the imputing of ſin, the Apoſtle means, the inflicting of death as a puniſhment for the breach of ſuch a law; as much as if he had ſaid, *death is not inflicted as a puniſhment for the breach of a law, except there be ſome poſitive law which declares that death is fixed to it as its ſanction.* And that this is his meaning appears from *verſe* 14. where he ſaith, that *death reigned from* Adam *to* Moſes, *even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of* Adam's *tranſgreſſion.* Here he allows, that thoſe death reigned over might be ſinners, but he denies that they had been guilty of the breach of ſuch a law as *Adam* had; they had not tranſgreſſed

a positive law which had death fixed to it as its sanction. Now if they had been guilty of sin which the *Apostle* here allows they might, and in the former verse asserts that they had, and if sin is the transgression of a law, and if they had not transgressed such a law as *Adam* did, then it will follow, that if the *Apostle* is consistent with himself, he makes a *distinction* between law and law: they had transgressed the law of nature, or the law given to *Noah*, and this made them guilty of sin; but they had not transgressed such a positive law, as had death fixed to it as its sanction, and so they had not sinned after the *similitude* or *likeness* of *Adam*'s transgression; and therefore death was not inflicted on them as a punishment for the breach of such a law, but was to them only as a consequence of that *mortality*, which *Adam* brought upon himself by transgressing, as aforesaid. The sense of the two verses I take to be this, *viz.* tho' we must allow on the one side, that sin prevailed in the world all that space of time, from *Adam* down to the giving of the law of *Moses*; and as we must allow on the other side, that death is not inflicted as a punishment for the breach of a law, where there is no law, which had declared that death is fixed to it as its sanction; yet, notwithstanding this death prevailed from *Adam* to *Moses* over those who had not transgressed such a law; and consequently death could not be inflicted upon them for the breach of a law which they had not transgressed, but only it was a consequence of that mortality. which Adam brought upon himself for the breaking of such a law.

Verse 15. *But not as the offence, so also is the free gift: for if through the offence of one, may be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, hath abounded unto many.* Which is, as if the Apostle had said, tho' *Adam* was a

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figure and *type of Chriſt*, and tho' the breach he made upon human nature was *univerſal*; yet, ſo great is the favour and gift of God to us in and thro' Chriſt, that the reparation made by him, is as *great* and *univerſal* to mankind, as the aforeſaid damage done by *Adam*; for if by *Adam*'s ſin, all mankind have fallen under the ſentence of death; much more the grace of God, which hath been diſplayed, in giving Chriſt to death for us, and in giving the future reſurrection from the dead through him, ſhall be extended to *all mankind* alſo.

Verſe 16. *And not as it was by one that ſinned, ſo is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many unto juſtification:* which is as much as if he had ſaid. the grace which God hath vouchſafed to mankind in Chriſt Jeſus, is *more abundant* than the ſentence laid upon *Adam*, as appears from this, *viz.* the ſentence of death which paſſed upon *Adam*, was for only *one ſingle offence*; but the gift of a future reſurrection, which God hath given to mankind in and thro' Chriſt Jeſus, is vouchſafed to us, tho' we have been guilty not only of one, but of *many offences*.

Verſe 17. *For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in life by one Jeſus Chriſt*: which is as much as if he had ſaid, for if by *one* offence of *Adam*, death paſſed upon all his poſterity, much more ſhall they *all* to whom God hath ſuper-abounded in grace, in giving his Son to death for them (even all mankind) be reſtored to life again thro' him.

Verſe 18. *Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even ſo by the righteouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all men, unto juſtification of life*: which is as much as

if

if he had ſaid, therefore as by *one offence*, even *Adam*'s eating the forbidden fruit, all men fell under the condemnation of death; ſo by one *act* of *righteouſneſs*, or obedience, *viz.* Chriſt's obedience to death upon the croſs, all men are reſtored to life again.

Verſe 19. *For as by one man's diſobedience, many were made ſinners* (brought into a ſtate of *mortality*, the cauſe being here put for the effect) *ſo by the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous*: which is as much as if he had ſaid, for as by *Adam*'s *ſin*, his poſterity became *mortal*, and ſo paſſed into a ſtate of death, which is the ſtate of *ſinners*; ſo by *Chriſt's obedience* unto *death*, even the death of the croſs, all *Adam*'s poſterity, both *Jew* and *Gentile*, are reſtored again to a ſtate of life, which in that reſpect is the ſtate of the *righteous*.

That by the terms *life*, and *juſtification of life*, and the like expreſſions, in the foregoing verſes, is not meant that *eternal life* which will be the portion and inheritance of the faithful, but only a bare *reſurrection* from that temporal death, which hath paſſed upon all men, as a conſequence or effect of *Adam*'s ſin, is plain from this, *viz.* that it will be univerſal to all over whom death hath prevailed, which is all mankind: whereas the eternal life, before mentioned, is every-where declared in the ſcriptures to be the portion of none but the faithful. The Apoſtle, in the foregoing verſes, makes it his buſineſs to prove, that the *benefit* and *advantage* mankind have by *Chriſt*, is as *great* and *univerſal* as the *damage* done by *Adam*, in order to prove, that the *Gentiles* have as great a ſhare in Chriſt as the *Jews*; and therefore, in his reaſoning upon this ſubject, he puts the term *life*, which he repreſents as a benefit from *Chriſt*, in oppoſition to the term *death*, which he repreſents as a damage coming from *Adam*; and he makes the

the benefit of the one, to be as *extenſive* and *univerſal* as the other; which can be true in no other caſe, than in the general reſurrection of all mankind, according to his own words, in 1 *Cor.* xv, 21. 22. *For ſince by man came death, by man came alſo the reſurrection of the dead; for as in* Adam *all died, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*, or raiſed again from the dead. Thus I think I have vindicated the *righteouſneſs* of *God*, and the *doctrine* of St *Paul*, from the unjuſt reflections caſt upon both.

If it ſhould be yet farther objected, admitting that there is no ſuch thing as *imputing* the guilt of one perſon's actions to another, who is no way acceſſory to his crimes; yet there is that which is equivalent to it, viz. *Adam* ſo *polluted himſelf*, and *human nature* (in him) by his tranſgreſſion, that he hath propagated a *ſinful nature* (or a natural inclination to ſin) to his children, and they to their children, and ſo on to all generations, Chriſt only excepted. Now this ſinful nature, or natural inclination to ſin, makes all thoſe to be *criminal*, or guilty of ſin, to whom it cleaves, and expoſes them to the *wrath* of God, tho' they do never actually tranſgreſs; and therefore, tho' *Adam*'s ſin is not imputed to his poſterity, yet his poſterity, may in a leſs proper ſenſe, be ſaid to *ſin in him*, inaſmuch as they receive a ſinful nature from him, which makes them ſinners, according as it is written in *Job* xiv. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* Pſalm li. 5. *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* Iſaiah xlviii. 8. *I knew that thou wouldeſt deal very treacherouſly, and waſt called a tranſgreſſor from the womb.* Eph. ii. 3. *And were by nature the children of wrath.* Anſwer; I have already ſhewn what ſin is, *viz.* that it is an irregular, diſorderly, or wicked act, either of the mind ſingly,

or

or of the mind and practice in conjunction, by which a perſon chuſes to do what in reaſon and juſtice he ought not, or chuſes to avoid what in reaſon and juſtice he ought to do; conſequently, no one can be guilty of ſin, till they do *actually* chuſe to do, or avoid doing as aforeſaid; and therefore whatever *weakneſs* or *diſorder Adam* brought upon himſelf, and his poſterity, by his tranſgreſſion, which makes them leſs able to withſtand temptations, and ſtrongly inclines them to comply with thoſe temptations, when under them, ſuch a diſorder is indeed mankind's *misfortune*, but it cannot, in the nature of the thing, be their crime; becauſe it is not the tranſgreſſion of a law, but only a great *diſadvantage* to thoſe who are obliged to be governed by a law, and are liable to ſuffer for the breach of it. Thus, for example, ſuppoſe a man to be of a very *cholerick* diſpoſition in his nature, which very ſtrongly *diſpoſes* him to *ſinful anger*, when provoked, this cholerick diſpoſition is lodged in his conſtitution, and is what he cannot prevent or remove, and therefore in itſelf can be no crime; but if when he is provoked, he doth not *bridle* and *reſtrain* this diſpoſition, but ſuffers himſelf to be hurried into ſinful anger by it, then indeed he becomes criminal. It is not his cholerick diſpoſition, but his *tranſgreſſing* of a *law*, which that diſpoſition contributed to, which is ſinful; and therefore tho' that diſpoſition is his great misfortune, yet it is not his crime. The caſe is the ſame in all thoſe diſpoſitions and inclinations which mankind may be ſuppoſed to receive from *Adam*, and to be labouring under; they are ſo many *impediments* in the way of our duty, but they are ſo far from being criminal in themſelves, that on the contrary they do rather, in reaſon and equity, *leſſen* and *extenuate* that crime, which they are the occaſion

occaſion of betraying us into; ſuch ſins being called ſins of *infirmity*; and God is ſo far from taking an advantage againſt us for it, or imputing it to us as a crime, that on the contrary he in pity to us, on this account, gave us *ſuch an high-prieſt as was touch'd with the feeling of our infirmities, who was in all points tempted as we are, and yet without ſin*, as in *Heb.* iv. 15, He appointed that his Son, or our high-prieſt, ſhould take upon him our fleſh, and become man, that in experiencing in himſelf the weakneſs and frailty of human nature, and how much bodily appetites and ſuffering do *tempt* and *diſpoſe* to ſin, he might be the better diſpoſed to commiſerate, pity, and help all in thoſe circumſtances; and ſo might be, as well a *merciful* as a faithful high-prieſt, in things pertaining to God, as in *chap.* ii. 17. Beſides, when men talk of receiving from *Adam* an inclination to ſin, it looks as if they did not at all conſider what they talk about; becauſe if we receive ſuch an inclination, this muſt be an inclination *at all times*; for otherwiſe, as it would not be natural, if it was only upon ſome occaſions in us, ſo if there were ſome times when we are free from this inclination, we ſhould certainly be free in the time of *infancy*, and conſequently no one would be a ſinner, till this inclination did actually take place in him.

Again, As this inclination muſt be at all times, ſo it muſt be to *only one particular ſin*, or elſe it muſt be to *all kind of ſin in general*. If to only one particular ſin, then it muſt be to that particular ſin which *Adam* was guilty of, *viz.* the *gratifying his appetite againſt law*; but that all mankind have a perpetual inclination to gratify their appetites againſt law, is falſe in fact; for a diſorder in our bodies oftentimes takes away all appetite to eating and drinking, and we are ſo far

from having in us an inclination to gratify our appetite againſt law, that on the contrary our inclination is againſt the gratifying our appetite at all. If this inclination is to all ſin in general, this is *impoſſible*; becauſe ſome ſins are ſo contrary to others in their nature, that we cannot have an *inclination* to one, but we muſt have an *averſion* to the other. Thus the man who is inclined to the ſin of *coveteouſneſs*, is averſe to the ſin of *profuſeneſs*. The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to many other ſins. That there is in men an inclination to gratify their appetites and affections, and that this inclination is *natural*, I readily grant; but that this inclination is *ſinful*, this *I deny*; becauſe as it is natural, ſo it is the *work of God* in us; for as God planted in our nature thoſe appetites and affections, ſo it was he that planted in us the inclination to gratify them; and this took place in *Adam*, *antecedent* to his tranſgreſſion, or elſe he had never tranſgreſſed; for if he had not had in himſelf an inclination to eat that which did appear to be good for food, he had never eaten of the forbidden fruit; nay, he had not eaten at all.

Here it may not be amiſs to obſerve the weakneſs human nature was under when in its *original ſtate*, as appears from *Adam*, who was drawn into ſin upon ſo *ſlight a temptation*. Men are apt to make a wide difference between *Adam*'s ſtate before he had eaten the forbidden fruit, and after he had eaten it, with reſpect to his inclination to ſin; but if this matter was carefully conſidered, it would appear that the difference was not ſo great as it is uſually repreſented to be; becauſe he could ſcarce be drawn into ſin with a *weaker temptation* after it, than he was before it. And even now, men muſt be grown *old* in wickedneſs, before they commit ſin without a temptation.

tion. Upon the whole, I think it abundantly evident, that no perſon is a ſinner, till he actually and perſonally tranſgreſſes, either with the mind ſingly, or with the mind and practice in conjunction. And as to thoſe places of ſcripture, which the objection refers to, when they are examined, it will appear, that they are far from proving what they are produced for.

As to *Job* xiv. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* To this I anſwer, that this text is quite beſide the objectors purpoſe. The words conſidered barely by themſelves (without any relation to the ſubject *Job* was treating of) are a general aſſertion, *viz.* that a clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean; which is the ſame as to ſay, the ſtream cannot be more pure than its fountain. Now this, as a general aſſertion, is true; but when this is uſed metaphorically, and is applied to other ſubjects, then it muſt be brought under ſuch limitations as the ſubject it is applied to, doth require. Thus our Lord ſaith, *Every tree is known by its fruit, a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a currupt tree bring forth good fruit*; this our Lord applies to the *falſe prophets*, and tells his diſciples, by their fruits they ſhould know them, as in *Matt.* vii. 15---20. Here the tree is as the fountain, and the fruit is as the ſtream; but if the metaphor be ſtrictly applied, this is not true; for a *good tree* does ſometimes bring forth *evil fruit*, tho' not generally ſo. The caſe is the ſame with men and their actions, which are as the fountain to the ſtream. *David* was a good man, and yet he brought forth ſome bad fruit or actions; and *Ahab* was a bad man, and yet he brought forth ſome good actions. *viz.* he humbly himſelf at the divine threat, and God ſpared him from the deſtruction threatened for its ſake, as in 1 *Kings* xxi. 29. Thus we ſee that

when the aforeſaid aſſertion, is metaphorically applied to other ſubjects, then it muſt not be taken ſtrictly, but under ſuch limitations as the ſubject requires. But if we ſhould apply this to a *man* and his *ſeed*, it is not at all true; for a very *bad man* may have very *good children*, and a very *good man* may have very *bad ones*. Thus *Jeroboham*, whoſe character is that he made *Iſrael* to ſin, had a good ſon, even *Abijah*; for in his youth *there was found in him ſome good thing towards the Lord God of* Iſrael, *in the houſe of* Jeroboham, as in 1 *Kings* xiv. 13. Here we ſee the ſtream was more pure than its fountain, a clean thing came out of an unclean (if it were juſt to apply the metaphor in this caſe) and therefore it is to no purpoſe to urge the general aſſertion of *Job*, in a caſe which, when applied, is not true. Sin is not *propagated* by generation, and therefore if *Adam* was never ſo great a ſinner, it does not follow that all his poſterity muſt be ſuch. Sin is a *moral* and not a natural evil; and therefore, though natural evils may be propagated by generation, yet moral evils cannot, becauſe they have a dependance upon the *will* of him to whom they cleave. Upon the whole, I ſay, though we cannot diſcern to what end *Job* urged this aſſertion, nor how he applied it to the ſubject he was treating of, which was the *ſhortneſs* and *frailty* of man's life; yet we are ſure he could not apply it to a man and his iſſue, except it was to prove, that an *immortal ſon* could not be produced by a *mortal Father*; in this caſe the metaphor was *juſt* and *true*, and the reaſon he urges in the next verſe is wholly applicable to it. Verſe 5. *Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſs.* But for *Job* to apply this to the *propagation* of ſin, as it was wholly for-

eign

ſign to his purpoſe, ſo it was not true, when thus applied.

As to *Pſalm* li. 5. *Behold, I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me*; to this I anſwer, it is one thing to be conceived *in ſin*, and another to be conceived *a ſinner*; the firſt of theſe refers to the ſin of the *parent*, which is the plain and expreſs words of the text; the latter refers to the ſin of the *child*, which is only a falſe interpretation put upon it; and therefore, I ſay, that this text is urged in this caſe without any appearance of ſtrength.

If it ſhould be objected, that *David* was now humbling himſelf before God, for his great offences of *murder* and *adultery*, and therefore the ſin of his parents was not a proper ground of humiliation to him upon this occaſion; and conſequently it was his *own ſin* which he referred to. I anſwer, If it was his own ſin, yet that was no more a proper ground for his humiliation, in this caſe, then the ſin of his parents; becauſe it was what he was no ways *acceſſory* to, nor could *prevent*, he being entirely *paſſive* therein; therefore the one was as proper a ground for his humiliation as the other. But farther, I ſay, the true ſtate of the caſe I take to be this, *David* in his devotion brings in every thing that might raiſe or expreſs the height of his affections, whether it were of joy or ſorrow; and ſo we find him calling upon the ſun and moon to praiſe God, as in *Pſalm* cxlviii. 3. Here *David* did not addreſs or petition the ſun and moon to be engaged in this work, but he only uſed theſe expreſſions to raiſe and expreſs his delight and joy in God. So in like manner, when he was humbling himſelf for his folly, he repreſents himſelf, not only as a great ſinner, but alſo (to *heighten* and *aggravate* his ſorrow) that he proceeded from *ſinful parents*. A caſe like this we have in *Iſaiah* vi. 5,

Where the Prophet complains againſt himſelf, *that he was a man of unclean lips*, and to *aggravate* his debaſement, he adds, *and I dwell among a people of unclean lips.*

As to *Iſaiah* xlviii. 8. *I knew that thou wouldeſt deal very treacherouſly, and was called a tranſgreſſor from the womb.* To this I anſwer, ſuppoſing this to reſpect *individuals*, yet it does not prove them to be tranſgreſſors from the womb; becauſe the ſcriptures often uſe ſuch loftineſs of ſpeech as expreſſes much more than the ſpeaker intends; thus in *Pſalm* lviii. 3. *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray as ſoon as they be born, ſpeaking lies.* Here the wicked are repreſented as ſpeaking lies as ſoon as they are born, even before they can ſpeak at all. The meaning is, they are ſinners from their youth upwards; ſo that to be tranſgreſſors from the womb, is no more than to be tranſgreſſors from their *youth.* But farther, I ſay, theſe words were ſpoken not to individual conſidered as ſuch, but to the *nation of Iſrael*, as appears from *verſe* 1. *Hear ye this, O houſe of* Jacob, *which are called by the name of* Iſrael, *&c.* Now this was true of them, conſidered as a *nation*, whoſe *birth*, as ſuch, was their coming out of *Egypt*; for before that time they were at moſt but a *multitude* of *bondmen.* And that they were tranſgreſſors from the womb, *Moſes* has given an abundant proof.

As to *Eph.* ii. 3. *And were by nature the children of wrath.* To this I anſwer, if St. *Paul* may be allowed to uſe the term *nature* in an *improper* ſenſe, as he does in 1 *Cor.* xi. 14. *Doth not even nature itſelf teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a ſhame unto him?* In this caſe nature, properly ſo called, is unconcerned; for ſuppoſing that it was then, and always had been a cuſtom, for both men and woman to wear their hair down to their girdles,

les. Would natural reaſon have taught us that this was *unſeemly* in the men, and yet *decent* in the women? no ſurely, nature hath nothing to ſay in this matter. It is *cuſtom* and *uſage* that make things ſeemly, or unſeemly, in the preſent caſe. It had been a cuſtom for men to have their hair cut, and not to wear it long as the women did, and this was uſed as a diſtinction of the ſexes; and for men to do otherwiſe the Apoſtle ſaith was a ſhame; which is as much as if he had ſaid, even the common uſage and cuſtom of mankind in this caſe teacheth you, that if a man have long hair, like a woman, it is a ſhame unto him, for that is to confound the diſtinction of ſexes. I ſay, if the Apoſtle may be allowed to uſe the word *nature* in the ſame ſenſe as before, then the ſence of the Apoſtle will appear to be this, *viz.* before you believing *Epheſians* were converted to chriſtianity, your cuſtomary and habitual wickedneſs juſtly expoſed you to the wrath of God, even as thoſe other *Gentiles* which are in the like caſe. But if the Apoſtle uſed the word *nature* in a proper ſenſe, then I think his meaning is this, *viz.* among whom alſo * *we* all had our converſation in times paſt, in the luſts of the fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind, and as ſuch we were naturally expoſed to the juſt diſpleaſure and wrath of God, even as the other *Gentiles* that are in the like wicked and unconverted ſtate.

Thus I have ſhewn that the texts referred to, do not anſwer the purpoſe for which they were produced, and ſo have fully anſwered this objection.

* The Apoſtle, as he was ſpeaking to the *Gentiles*, puts himſelf in the place of a *Gentile*, and uſes the term we.

TRACT VI.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning Juſtification,

THIS enquiry conſiſts of two parts; *firſt*, of juſtification in general; and *ſecondly*, of the juſtification of a chriſtian in particular.

Firſt, Of juſtification in general. I obſerve that as juſtification is a law term, ſo it imports (in the firſt and moſt proper ſenſe) that diſcharge or act of acquitment which he that ſits in judgment pronounces upon the perſon under trial; and therefore juſtification preſuppoſes ſeveral things, *viz.* a governour and governed, a law or rule that the governed is to act by, and a tribunal or act of enquiry, whether the perſon governed has walked exactly according to that rule. And as juſtification is an acquitting of the perſon under trial, ſo that acquitment is either an act of debt, or of grace. If when due enquiry hath been made, the perſon under trial is found innocent, that is, hath acted exactly agreeably to the rule which was given him and by which he is tried, then juſtification is a debt which the judge is, in ſtrict juſtice, obliged to make good, and the innocent perſon may lawfully demand as his right. But if when enquiry hath been made, the perſon under trial is found guilty that is, hath acted diſagreeably to the rule given him to walk by, then if he is acquitted, that acquitment muſt be an act of grace, and not of debt, becauſe the judge is ſo far from being obliged, in juſtice, to acquit him, that on the

contrary

contrary he might juſtly condemn him. His tranſgreſſion of the rule juſtly expoſes him to that ſentence of condemnation, which is a proportional puniſhment to his tranſgreſſion; and conſequently, if he is acquited, it muſt be wholly of grace, and not of debt.

Secondly, Of the Juſtification of a chriſtian. I obſerve, *firſt*, that as juſtification is a two-fold ſtream which flows from two different fountains, the one of debt, flowing from the innocency of the perſon juſtified, the other of grace, flowing from the merciful goodneſs of the lawgiver; ſo the juſtification of a chriſtian is wholly of the later ſort, *viz.* of grace. The chriſtian hath no right founded in innocency to claim an acquitment at God's bar, becauſe he is a tranſgreſſor of God's law; and therefore his acquitment is founded in the merciful goodneſs of God the lawgiver. For the proof of this obſervation, ſee *Rom.* iii. 9. 23. We have before proved, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that they are all under ſin. ——— *All have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* James iii. 2. *In many thing we offend all.* 1 John i. 8, 10. *If we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us,* —— *If we ſay that we have not ſinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.* Here we ſee that all chriſtians are chargeable with ſin; and conſequently, if they are acquitted at God's bar, their juſtification muſt be of grace, and not of debt. Moreover, this is directly aſſerted by St. *Paul.* Rom. iii. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, thro' the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* Eph. ii. 24. *&c. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickened us together with Chriſt, (by grace ye are ſaved.)* ----- *For by Grace ye are ſaved, tho' faith; and that not of your ſelves; it is the gift of God: not of works*

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(or as a debt) *leaſt any man ſhould boaſt.* This is likewiſe farther prov'd, from all thoſe texts where in God is ſaid to pardon and to forgive ſins, as in *Matt.* vi. 14. *If you forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you.* Eph. iv. 32, *Forgiving one another, even as God, for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven you.* 1 John i. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* Chap. ii. 12. *I have written unto you, little children, becauſe your ſins are forgiven you, for his name's ſake.* From all which I think it is abundantly evident, that chriſtians have no right, founded in innocency, to claim an acquitment at God's bar, ſeeing they are tranſgreſſors of his law; but their acquitment is founded wholly upon the merciful goodneſs of God the lawgiver, who gives them their diſcharge wholly of his free grace.

I obſerve, *ſecondly*, that as the juſtification of a chriſtian is wholly of grace, and not of debt, ſo there is ſomething pre-requiſite which makes the chriſtian the ſuitable object of this favour of juſtification, *viz.* repentance, and faith; not that this pre-requiſite is a meritorious cauſe of that juſtification, for them it would be of debt, and not of grace; but only that it diſpoſes him (in whom it is found) and makes him a ſuitable object for this grace to be exerciſed upon. By repentance, I underſtand an awakening ſenſe of the evil nature, and the dreadful conſequences of ſin; a conviction of our own guilt; a deep ſorrow, humiliation or pain of mind, that we have done amiſs; a confeſſion of our folly, and an actual forſaking it. By faith I underſtand two things, *firſt*, faith in Chriſt that is, a believing or being perſwaded, upon rational grounds, that he is the true *Meſſiah*, the only begotten, and the moſt beloved Son of God, the anointed Lord and Saviour of mankind; and

that

that the glad tidings which he publiſhed to the world are true, *viz.* that God is in and by him reconciling ſinful mankind to himſelf. *Secondly*, Faithfulneſs to him, that is, an honeſt profeſſion of his name and truth; an humble and dutiful ſubmiſſion to his kingdom and government, a patient bearing of his croſs, and a perſevering in hope of the heavenly inheritance. For the proof of this obſervation, ſee *Luke* xiii. 3. 5. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Mark xvi. 16. *He that believes not ſhall be damned.* John viii. 24. *Except ye believe that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Heb. xii. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holineſs without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* In theſe texts the foregoing obſervation is prov'd negatively, by proving that where repentance and faith are wanting, the perſon which is deſtitute of them will be condemned, and conſequently will not be juſtified.

Note, When I ſay, where faith is wanting, I mean ſuch a want, as ariſes from a refuſing to attend to the evidences, upon which faith, in the preſent caſe is founded; and not ſuch a want, as ariſes from an incapacity of aſſenting, for want of that evidence. And when I conſider faith as a pre-requiſite to juſtification, I do not conſider it barely as an act of aſſent, but as it is a principle of action, and a foundation of that repentance and reformation, which renders men the ſuitable and proper objects of God's mercy.

For a poſitive proof of the foregoing obſervation, ſee *Mark* i. 15. *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the goſpel.* Chap. vi. 12. *They went out and preached, that men ſhould repent.* John xx. 31. *Theſe things are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God.* Acts xx. 21. *Teſtifying both to the* Jews, *and alſo to the* Greeks, *repentance towards*

wards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Rom. xv. 18. *For I will not dare to ſpeak of any of thoſe things which Chriſt hath not wrought by me, to make the* Gentiles *obedient, both in word and deed.* James i. 22. *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own ſelves.* In theſe texts we ſee the forementioned pre-requiſites are neceſſary. Again, *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* Luke xxiv. 47. *That repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name.* John iii. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Chap. xiii. 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* Chap. xx. 31. *Theſe are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life thro' his name.* Acts xi. 18. *Then hath God alſo unto the* Gentiles *granted repentance unto life.* 2 Cor. vii. 10. *Godly ſorrow worketh repentance unto ſalvation, not to be repented of.* Heb. x. 39. *We are not of them which draw back unto perdition, but of them which believe, to the ſaving of the ſoul.* Rev. ii. 10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Here we ſee that repentance, faith in, and faithfulneſs to Jeſus Chriſt have the benefit of juſtification annexed to them. Upon the whole, I think it is abundantly evident that repentance and faith are pre-requiſites to and make chriſtians the ſuitable objects of the forementioned favour of juſtification.

I obſerve, *thirdly*, that as the chriſtian's juſtification is wholly of grace, ariſing from the merciful goodneſs of God, the lawgiver; ſo this favour is vouchſafed to obedient believers upon the account, and for the ſake of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, who hath uſed his intereſt to obtain the favour for them at God's hand. Chriſt ſo recommende

commended himſelf to his Father's love, in undertaking the cauſe of ſinners, and in proſecuting the work of their redemption (from ſin and ſatan) with ſincerity and faithfulneſs, even unto the death of the croſs; that his father hath, as a reward of that undertaking, not only raiſed him from the dead, and exalted him at his right hand, and ſet him to be their Lord and governour; but alſo he accepts of his mediation and interceſſion for them, and pardons them upon his account, and for his ſake, and gives him authority to acquit them at the day of trial; ſo that they are ſaid to be juſtified by Chriſt, not only as he is appointed by his Father actually to acquit them at the day of judgment, but alſo as they are juſtified by his obedience unto death, both as that obedience is a prevailing argument with chriſtians to exerciſe that faith and obedience which make them the ſuitable objects of this grace; and alſo as it is a prevailing argument with God to beſtow this favour of juſtification upon all true believers. For the proof of this obſervation, ſee *John* x. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I may take it again.* ——— *This commandment I have received of my Father.* ——— Phil. ii. 8, 9. *He humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs; wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him.* Heb. xii. 2. *Who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Here we ſee that Chriſt's humble obedience unto death recommended him to his father's love, and was the ground of his exaltation at God's right hand. *Rom.* viii. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* Heb.

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vii. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* Chap. ix. 24. *Chriſt is not entered into the holy place made with hands:——but into heaven itſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us.* Eph. iv. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as God, for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven you.* 1 John ii. 12. *I write unto you, little children, becauſe your ſins are forgiven you; for his* (*viz.* Chriſt's) *name ſake.* Here we ſee, that Chriſt's interceſſion is available for the juſtification of all true believers; and conſequently, that tho' their juſtification is wholly of grace, and not of debt, yet it is vouchſafed, upon the account, and for the ſake of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, who uſes his intereſt to obtain this favour for them at God's hand. And this St. *Paul* declares. *Rom.* iii. 24. *That as they were freely juſtified by God's grace; ſo it was through the redemption that was in Jeſus Chriſt.* This is plainly the caſe, as it is repreſented in the *ſcriptures*; though, I think, we ought not to underſtand it *ſo ſtrictly*, as that God would have been *abſolutely implacable* to penitent returning ſinners, had not his reſentment been *abated*, by the mediation and interceſſion of another in their behalf, ſuch a propoſition being injurious to *truth*, and to the *moral character* of our heavenly Father; it being equally as *wrong*, in the nature of the thing, and thereby would be as much an *imperfection* in God, for him to *withhold* his mercy from thoſe, who are the ſuitable and proper objects of it, except interceſſion be made to him in their behalf, as it would be for him to be *prevailed* upon, by an interceſſor, to ſhew mercy to thoſe, who are not the proper objects of it. Again,

I obſerve, *fourthly*, that this favour of juſtification will be vouchſafed to all true believers at

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that day, when the body of mankind ſhall be ſummoned to give up their account to Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. Then ſhall every true chriſtian, that is, every one in whom the forementioned pre-requiſites are found, partake of God's act of grace, by being acquitted or abſolved, and ſo diſcharged from that puniſhment and condemnation to which their ſins had juſtly expoſed, and the righteous law of God had bound them over. For the proof of this obſervation, ſee *Eccleſ.* iii. 17. *I ſaid in mine heart, God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked.* Chap. xii. 14. *God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Acts x. 42. *To teſtify that it was he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.* Chap. xvii. 31. *Becauſe he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained.* Rom. ii. 16. *In the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt.* Chap. xiv. 10, 12. *We muſt all ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.---So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.* 2 Tim. iv. 1. *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead.* 1 Pet. iv. 5. *Who ſhall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and dead.* Here we ſee, that as *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by Jeſus Chriſt*; ſo all perſons, and all that they have done, ſhall paſs under that trial; every work, every ſecret thing, whether good or evil, and all perſons, both quick and dead, the righteous and the wicked, chriſtians as well as others. *For*, ſaith St. *Paul* to the chriſtian *Romans*, *we muſt all ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.* Matt. xxv. 32----34. *Before him* (*viz.* Chriſt) *ſhall be gathered all nations, and he ſhall ſeparate them one from another,*

ther, as a ſhepherd divideth his ſheep from the goats; and he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then ſhall the King ſay to them on his right hand, come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, &c. Verſe 41. *Then ſhall he ſay to them on the left hand, depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Verſe 46. *Theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment, but the righteous into life eternal.* 2 Cor. v. 10. *We muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Rev. xx. 12, 13. *I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works; and the ſea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works.* Here we ſee that the reſult or iſſue of the aforeſaid general judgment is the acquitting or condemning of the perſons brought to trial, according as their works have made them the ſuitable objects of God's favour or diſpleaſure; and conſequently that the juſtification of a chriſtian will then, and not till then, take place.

Theſe four I take to be the principal ingredients in a chriſtian's juſtification. *Firſt*, That it is wholly of grace, and not of debt. *Secondly*, That the pre-requiſites to, and which make chriſtians the ſuitable objects of this favour are, repentance, faith in, and faithfulneſs to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Thirdly*, The motive or argument with God, for beſtowing this act of grace upon all true believers, is the obedience of his Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who as he became obe-

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dient unto the death of the croſs, ſo he hath obtained to be a prevailing interceſſor for all obedient believers, and God vouchſafes to pardon and acquit them upon his account, and for his ſake. *Fourthly*, That this grace will be actually diſpenſed to all the ſuitable objects of it, at the great and general judgment.

The caſe being thus ſtated, and proved, from hence we learn, *firſt*, the needleſsneſs of that great debate, *viz.* whether chriſtians are juſtified by faith alone, or both by faith and works; for if by faith is meant a believing what God hath revealed, or, in other words, a believing in the perſon and meſſage of the Meſſiah, which is commonly called *chriſtian faith*, or an aſſenting to the truth of the chriſtian revelation; and if by works is meant chriſtian obedience; or, in other words, the ſincere practice of that unfeigned repentance, purity, piety, humility, juſtice, and charity, which is ſuitable to, and founded upon that belief, then it appears, from the foregoing obſervations, that we are juſtified neither by faith nor works; if by being juſtified by theſe, we mean, that theſe, or either of theſe is the meritorious cauſe of that juſtification, becauſe (as I have ſhewn) the chriſtian is juſtified wholly of God's free grace, which excludes all merit in the perſon juſtified, when we uſe the word merit in its firſt and moſt proper ſenſe, as is ſuppoſed here. But if, by being juſtified by theſe, we mean, that theſe, or either of theſe is pre-requiſite to, and that which makes chriſtians the ſuitable objects of this favour; then it appears, from what hath been already obſerv'd, that chriſtians are juſtified both by faith and by works, becauſe both faith and works are neceſſary to make men the ſuitable objects of this grace, the latter always pre-ſuppoſing the former, tho' it is not always a neceſſary conſequence of it; for tho'

chriſtian obedience always ſuppoſes chriſtian faith as its root, yet chriſtian faith doth not always bring forth the fruit of chriſtian obedience; and therefore, as St. *James* obſerves, chap. ii. 14. and to the end of that chapter, *that a man may have faith alone without works*; ſo he likewiſe aſſures us, that faith alone doth not make us the ſuitable objects of the forementioned grace of juſtification, becauſe both faith and works are neceſſary to that end.

I obſerve farther, that the faith, pre-requiſite to the juſtification of a chriſtian, is the belief of thoſe divine truths which God hath revealed to us in and by Chriſt Jeſus, and not a ſtrong perſuaſion in us that we are particularly elected, that God loves us with his ſpecial love, and that Chriſt died for us in particular, which ſome men miſcall juſtifying-faith: I ſay, the faith which makes chriſtians the ſuitable objects of God's grace of juſtification (when it is accompanied with chriſtian obedience or good works) is the former only, and not the latter; becauſe it is the former only, and not the latter of theſe, which can, in any propriety of ſpeech, be called faith. For as in general, faith is an aſſent of the mind to the truth of a propoſition revealed to us by another, ſo it is our aſſenting to thoſe truths that God hath revealed, which is properly divine faith; and therefore as God hath revealed the truths of the chriſtian religion, but hath no where revealed, that any particular perſon is elected, or that he loves him with his ſpecial love, or that Chriſt died for him in particular, there being no ſuch propoſition to be found in any part of his revelation; ſo conſequently it is the former only, and not the latter, which is divine faith, or that faith, which (when it is accompanied with chriſtian obedience) diſpoſes chriſtians for the favour of juſtification.

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Indeed, as God has promiſed his ſpecial love, *&c.* to all obedient believers, whoever can be ſure, upon good grounds, that they are ſuch obedient believers as God's promiſe is made to, may be ſure that God loves them with his ſpecial love, *&c.* But then this aſſurance is, in no ſenſe, divine faith, but only a rational and juſt concluſion drawn from its proper premiſes; one of which premiſes is divine faith, or an aſſenting to ſome truth revealed by God.

From this obſervation we may ſee the groundleſsneſs of ſome mens confidence (which they call, a being ſtrong in faith) for if they can work up themſelves to a ſtrong perſuaſion that they are elected, that God loves them with his ſpecial love, and that Chriſt died for them in particular, then they conclude, that they have the faith of God's elect, or juſtifying faith; and conſequently, that they are in a ſafe condition, and that all is well. But as theſe men are perſuaded of what God hath not revealed, and as that is not divine faith, ſo this perſuaſion, whether it be well or ill grounded, is of no manner of uſe to them, with reſpect to their juſtification; becauſe at the day of judgment, our Lord will deal with us according to what we really are, and not according to what we have confidently conceited ourſelves to be. Every one, in whom the pre-requiſites of faith and chriſtian obedience are found, Chriſt will acquit at the day of trial, whether they think themſelves the objects of this grace or not; for, ſuppoſing ſuch a man to be ſtrongly perſuaded that he is a reprobate, his perſuaſion doth not make him ſo; for his error, in this caſe, is not a defect of faith, but only an humble and groundleſs jealouſy of himſelf, and therefore his error will make no alteration in his ſentence. It may make his life uncomfortable to him here, but it will not affect

his future ſtate, except it makes him decline his duty, ; becauſe, as I ſaid before, our Lord will not deal with us according to the judgment we paſs upon ourſelves, nor yet according to the judgment that others paſs upon us, but he will deal with us according to the truth and reality of our caſe. So on the other ſide, ſuppoſing a man ſtrongly perſuaded that he is elect, if this perſuaſion ſhould be groundleſs, it might do the perſon, in whom it takes place, a great deal of hurt, in preventing his ſeeking and endeavouring after thoſe pre-requiſites which are abſolutely neceſſary to his ſafety, but it can do him no real ſervice, becauſe our Lord will not treat men according to their preſumptuous conceit of themſelves, but according as he finds their caſe to be; and therefore, if they are deſtitute of the prerequiſites to God's act of grace, he will condemn them, notwithſtanding their perſuaſion to the contrary. This obſervation likewiſe ſhews the groundleſsneſs of ſome mens fears, who becauſe they cannot find in themſelves the forementioned ſtrong perſuaſion that they are elected, *&c.* from hence they are led to fear that they have not true faith, and conſequently that they are reprobated; whereas true faith, or the faith which makes men the ſuitable objects of God's love, is a believing what God hath revealed, and an anſwering the great deſign of that revelation, by conforming our minds and lives to the mind and will of God diſcovered to us thereby. But farther, I ſay, if by faith is meant a covenant of faith or grace (faith and grace, in this caſe, being the ſame thing) that is, if thereby is meant ſuch a covenant which gives juſtification as a favour to all thoſe whoſe faith and ſincere obedience make them the ſuitable objects of this favour; and if by works is meant a covenant of works, even

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ſuch a covenant as does not give juſtification as a favour, but pays it as a debt to all thoſe whoſe innocency or exact obedience gives them a legal right and title to it; then it appears, from the foregoing obſervations, that chriſtians are juſtified wholly, and only by faith, or a covenant of faith, and not at all by works, or a covenant of works, the chriſtian's juſtification flowing wholly, and only from the merciful goodneſs of God, the law-giver, as I have ſhewn, and not from the innocency of the perſon juſtified. Again,

We learn, *ſecondly*, the groundleſsneſs of that opinion, that chriſtians are juſtified by the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt; becauſe the chriſtian's juſtification is not founded upon the innocency or righteouſneſs of the perſon juſtified, but in the merciful goodneſs of God, the law-giver, and ſo it is wholly of grace, and not of debt, as I have ſhewn. But if the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is made the chriſtian's righteouſneſs, and if they are juſtified by virtue of the righteouſneſs of another, which is made their own by imputation, it clearly follows, that their juſtification is not of grace, but of debt. The perſon thus ſtanding in the innocency or righteouſneſs of another may lawfully demand it as his right; and it would be an act of criminal injuſtice in the judge to with-hold it from him. For, whatever grace might be exerciſed in imputing the innocency of one perſon to another, yet when that innocency is thus imputed, then juſtification becomes the perſon's right, who is thus poſſeſs'd of it; ſo that it is wholly of debt, and not of grace. I ſay, *if the innocency of one is imputed to another.* Here I only ſuppoſe the thing for argument ſake, becauſe in reality there is no ſuch thing in nature; for guilt and innocency are perſonal, and ſtick ſo cloſe to him, in whom they

take place, that they cannot be tranſpoſed from one to another. God may, indeed, if he pleaſes, pardon the guilty, and treat them as innocent; and the innocency of one perſon may be an argument with him to ſhew kindneſs to another perſon which is guilty; but ſtill the guilt and innocence of each reſt only upon the perſon who exerciſed them, and this is plainly the chriſtian's caſe. God is pleaſed to pardon believing penitents, and to treat them as innocent, and the argument or motive, which induces him to exerciſe this grace, is the innocency or righteouſneſs, or in other words, the humble obedience of his Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is become an interceſſor for us, and upon whoſe account, and for whoſe ſake, God is pleaſed to vouchſafe this grace to penitent believers. So that mens conceits of being juſtified, by virtue of Chriſt's perfect righteouſneſs being imputed to them, has no foundation, neither in the nature of the thing, nor in the chriſtian revelation. The chriſtian revelation every where repreſents the chriſtian's juſtification to be of grace, and not of debt; and that God exerciſes his mercy in the pardon and forgiveneſs of their ſins; and that they are juſtified by faith, or a covenant of faith, and not by a covenant of works; in which covenant of faith nothing is required as the meritorious cauſe of juſtification, becauſe in this covenant God gives it wholly of his free grace, *Rom.* iv. 24. *Eph.* ii. 4. *&c.* Which excludes all merit, properly ſo called, both in the perſon juſtified, and in any other that might be inſtrumental in procuring that favour for him, *Rom.* xi. 6. *And if by grace, then it is no more of works* (either of the perſon himſelf, or of any other that ſhall work, and ſo merit it for him) *otherwiſe grace is no more grace*; *but if it be of works* (either of the perſon himſelf, or of any other that ſhall work

work in his ſtead) *then it is no more grace, otherwiſe work is no more work,*

If it ſhould be here objected, that St. *Paul*, Rom. iv. 3. 6. ſaith *that* Abraham *believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs*; and that *David* deſcribes the bleſſedneſs of the man unto whom God imputes righteouſneſs without works; ſeeing then that righteouſneſs is imputed, it muſt be the righteouſneſs of another, *viz.* Chriſt, becauſe the perſon, to whom it it here ſaid to be imputed, had no perſonal righteouſneſs of his own, he being without works, as the text expreſſes it. I anſwer: As to *Abraham*'s *faith being accounted to him for righteouſneſs*, this proves fully what I am pleading for, *viz.* that *Abraham* was not juſtified by the imputed righteouſneſs of another, for if he had, then there had been no room nor need for his *own faith to be counted to him for righteouſneſs*; he being perfectly righteous himſelf, by having the perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to him. But *Abraham* not being able to ſtand upon that foot, God was pleas'd to juſtify him freely by his grace, and to accept of his faith, and ſincere obedience, as that which diſpoſed, and made him meet for this favour, inſtead of that perfect obedience which would have given him a legal title to it. And as to the bleſſedneſs *David* ſpeaks of, that did not conſiſt in a perſon's being made righteous, by virtue of the righteouſneſs of another imputed to him; but it conſiſted in his having a ſhare in the mercy of God, which was exerciſed in the forgiveneſs of his ſins, and in receiving him into a ſtate of favour, as if he had never tranſgreſs'd. And that this is the truth of the caſe, appears from the following words, *verſe* 7. 8. *Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered; bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute ſin.* Here we ſee that

this bleſſedneſs doth not conſiſt in a perſon's ſtanding in the imputed righteouſneſs of another, but in his having a ſhare in the mercy of God, who forgives him his ſins, not imputing them unto him, that is, not puniſhing him for them, but treating him as if he had not ſinned.

If it ſhould be here replied, that *Iſaiah* ſaith, *All our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags*, chap. lxiv. 6. and that St. *Paul*, Phil. iii. 9. ſaith, *That he deſired to be found in Chriſt, not having his own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs, which is of God by faith.* And that St. *John* ſaith, John iii. 7. *Little Children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, even as he* (*viz.* Chriſt) *is righteous.* Here, if all our perſonal reghteouſneſs is as *filthy rags*, which ſtink in the noſtrils of the moſt high, according to the Prophet's declaration, and if St. *Paul deſired to be found having righteouſneſs*, but not having his own righteouſneſs, both which are expreſſed in his words, it will neceſſarily follow, that as our righteouſneſs is unacceptable to God, ſo St. *Paul* deſired *to be found in the righteouſneſs of another*, which he could not be found in, except that righteouſneſs was made his own by imputation. Again, *if he that doth righteouſneſs is righteous even as*, or to that degree in which *Chriſt is righteous*, from hence it will follow, that righteouſneſs is made his by imputation, becauſe his own righteouſneſs cannot make him righteous, as, or to that degree of righteouſneſs Chriſt hath attained to, whith is aſſerted by St. *John*.

I anſwer, 'Tis to be obſerved that the good works, or righteous acts of good men, are ſo far from being as filthy rags which ſtink in the noſtrils of God, that, on the contrary, they are like a ſweet preſume, which is highly acceptable to him.

For

For the proof of this obſervation, ſee *Acts* x. 4. *And he (viz.* the angel*) ſaid unto him* (Cornelius) *thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.* Heb. xiii. 16. *To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed.* I obſerve farther, that the good works of hypocrites and wicked men, who perform ſome acts of obedience to God's law, but live in the wilful habitual breach of the moſt coſiderable parts of it; ſuch men's good works, or righteouſneſſes, are as filthy rags, which ſtink in the noſtrils of God (if I may ſo ſpeak.) The people of *Iſrael* put on an appearance of holineſs. and did many acts of obedience to the ceremonial part of God's law, which the Prophet calls *their righteouſneſſes*, when at the ſame time their hands where full of blood and rapine, and other abominations. And this their abominable wickedneſs made even their acts of obedience, which otherways were good (becauſe commanded to be done) to be as filthy rags in God's ſight. And that this is the true ſtate of the caſe, appears plainly in the firſt chapter of *Iſaiah*'s prophecy, where he tells the people, *That their new moons, and their appointed feaſts, were hateful to God, and that he was weary to bear them*, verſe 14. And the reaſon given is, *that their hands were full of blood*, verſe 15 As to the words of St. *Paul*, in *Phil.* iii. 9. he is there ſpeaking of a two-fold righteouſneſs, not ſuch a righteouſneſs as gave a legal title to juſtification, but only ſuch as made men the ſuitable objects of that grace. The firſt ſort was that righteouſneſs which conſiſted in a ſtrict obſervance of the ceremonial law of *Moſes*, which he mentions, *verſe 6. as touching the righteouſneſs which is in the law, blameleſs.* The ſecond ſort of righteouſneſs was chriſtian obedience, or a conformity of mind and life, to the mind and life of Chriſt, which the goſpel required as neceſſary

neceſſary to our acceptance in God's ſight. Now the Apoſtle deſir'd that he might be found in Chriſt, that is a true chriſtian, not having the former, but the latter ſort of righteouſneſs; becauſe the former would do him no ſervice as a chriſtian, but the latter would render him a ſuitable object of divine grace. And tho' the Apoſtle uſes the term, *mine own righteouſneſs*, this is not oppoſed to the righteouſneſs of another, which he deſired to be found in; but it is the righteouſneſs of the ceremonial law of *Moſes*, oppoſed to the righteouſneſs of chriſtian obedience, which the goſpel recommended. And to make the text anſwer the full and true meaning of the Apoſtle, I conceive it may be fill'd up, and read thus; tho' I have as much ground to boaſt as any man, with reſpect to external privileges and performances; yet theſe are ſo mean, in my opinion, that I eſteem them but as droſs and dung in compariſon of that ineſtimable treaſure the goſpel, for which I have ſuffer'd the loſs of all things, and count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, or that righteouſneſs which conſiſts in an external obſervance of the ceremonial law of *Moſes* (which the *Jews* and *Judaizing* chriſtians value themſelves upon) but I do deſire to be found a true chriſtian, having that righteouſneſs, or chriſtian obedience, which my faith in Chriſt ought to produce in me, and which will make me the ſuitable object of God's grace. As to the words of St. *John*, he defined hereby to convince men that it was in vain for them to expect that their faith in Chriſt, or their profeſſion of the chriſtian religion. or any extraordinary illumination, or any pretended love to God or Chriſt, or union with them, would be of any ſervice to them, with reſpect to their acceptance with God,

except

except they brought forth the fruits of righteouſneſs or chriſtian obedience. And as to the term *even as* the Apoſtle did not intend an equality, but only the certainty and likeneſs of the thing to which it is compared. A caſe like this we have in *verſe* 3 *Every man that hath this hope in him* (*viz.* of ſeeing Chriſt, and being made like unto him) *purifieth himſelf even as he* (*viz.* Chriſt) *is pure.* Here St. *John* doth not mean by the term *even as*, an equality of purity, but only a likeneſs, and the certainty of the thing; which is as much as if he had ſaid, every man, that in good earneſt hopes to ſee Chriſt at his appearing, and be made like unto him, purefies himſelf like as Chriſt is pure, or as certainly as Chriſt is pure. So in like manner, by the term *even as*, in the preſent caſe, the Apoſtle means that he which doth righteouſneſs is righteous, like as Chriſt did righteouſneſs, and is righteous; or he is righteous as certainly, as Chriſt did righteouſly, and is ſo. Here I think likewiſe that there are ſeveral words wanting to expreſs the full and true meaning of the Apoſtle, which when fill'd up may be read thus; little children, let no man deceive you in this important point, for he, and only he, that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous in God's acceptance, even like as Chriſt did righteouſly, and is righteous, or as certainly as Chriſt did righteouſneſs, and is ſo. Again,

We learn, *thirdly*, from the foregoing obſervations, that the doctrine of Chriſt's paying a full and equal ſatisfaction (in the original and ſtrict ſenſe of the word) to the juſtice of God, for the ſins and offences of mankind, and of chriſtians being juſtified upon that foot; I ſay, we learn that theſe doctrines are erroneous: for if ſinners are juſtified freely by God's grace, if God exerciſes his mercy in the forgiveneſs of their ſins, if this

this forgiveneſs is obtain'd to them by the interceſſion of Chriſt, who uſes his intereſt with God for them, and if God pardons the beleiving penitent upon Chriſt's account, and for his ſake, (as I have ſhewn(from hence it will neceſſarily and unavoidably follow, that there hath been no ſuch equal ſatisfaction paid to God; becauſe if there had been, then juſtification would be of debt, and not of grace; for, whatever grace might be exerciſed in the ſatisfier, there could be none in the ſatisfied. When ſuch ſatisfaction had been made, a releaſe became due, and there could be no ſuch thing as forgiveneſs of ſins, becauſe there would be no ſin to be forgiven; neither could Chriſt become an interceſſor for the ſinner's pardon, becauſe he had prevented himſelf by making full ſatisfaction for the damage done; neither could God forgive the penitent upon Chriſt's account, and for his ſake, becauſe there was no room nor place for the exerciſing of ſuch mercy.

TRACT.

TRACT VII.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning the ſenſe and meaning of our Lord's words, *viz. Son thy ſins be forgiven thee*; as in *Mark* ii. 5.

FOR the right underſtanding of theſe words, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that as ſin is a *tranſgreſſion* of God's law; ſo God is pleaſed to manifeſt his diſlike of ſin, by *puniſhing* the tranſgreſſors of that law: which puniſhment is two-fold, either, *firſt*, by inflicting upon *temporary* afflictions and death in this world; or *ſecondly*, by puniſhing them with *everlaſting* death in the world to come. Thus we read, *Acts* xii. 23. that *Herod*, for his impiety, was ſmitten with a ſore diſeaſe, that he was eaten of worms and died And St. *Paul* informs us, that the *Corinthians*, for the *abuſe* of the Lord's ſupper (an ordinance inſtituted to perpetuate the *memory* of Chriſt's death to all poſterity, and to awaken and keep alive in the minds of chriſtians an affecting ſenſe of *Chriſts love* in laying down his precious life in their cauſe, and for their ſake) I ſay, for the abuſe of this ordinance, ſome of them were ſickly, and ſome were fallen aſleep (or dead) 1 *Cor.* xi. 30. So again we read, *Luke* xvi. 22. 23. *That the rich man alſo died and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment.* And *verſe* 25. Abraham *ſaid unto him, ſon, remember that thou in thy life receivedſt thy good things, and* Lazarus *evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* And Chriſt is repreſented, in

Matt.

Matt. xxv 41. as ſaying to the wicked at the day of judgment, *Go, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire prepared for the devil and his angels*, &c. From all which, it plainly appears, that God puniſhes ſome men for their ſins in this world, and ſome in the world to come; and perhaps ſome ſinners he puniſhes in both.

And, as God is pleaſed to manifeſt his diſlike of ſin, by puniſhing the tranſgreſſors, as aforeſaid ſo he is pleas'd, upon proper occaſions, to manifeſt his mercy, in forgiving the offender; which forgiveneſs conſiſts in the remitting or taking away thoſe puniſhments, which are either inflicted upon or threatened to the ſinner: and accordingly forgiveneſs is likewiſe two-fold, as it relates to the two kinds of puniſhment to be remitted or taken away, *viz.* temporary puniſhments in this world, and everlaſting puniſhments in the world to come. Thus we read, that becauſe *Ahab* humbled himſelf before the Lord, the Lord remitted to him the temporal puniſhment which he had threatened upon *Ahab*, and his houſe, and would not bring the *evil in his days*, 1 *Kings* xxi. 29. Likewiſe God was pleaſed to remit the temporary puniſhment threatened againſt the people of *Nineveh*, becauſe they *repented* at the preaching of *Jonah*, *chap.* iii. 10. Thus again we read, that St. *Paul* was a great offender, in that he perſecuted the church of God, and compelled chriſtians to *blaſpheme*, *Acts* xxvi. 11. And yet he declares for himſelf, that there was *laid up for him a crown of righteouſneſs* (in another world) *which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhould give him at the day of judgment*, 2 Tim. iv, 8. and conſequently that the everlaſting puniſhment, in another world, which was threatened to, and due for his ſins, ſhould be remitted unto him. Our Lord likewiſe declares, that thoſe, which did *blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt*,

Ghoſt, ſhould not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come, *Matt.* xii. 42. From all which, it manifeſtly appears, that forgiveneſs of ſin is two-fold; *firſt*, in remitting or taking away the temporary puniſhment inflicted upon, and threatened to men in this world, for their ſins; and, *ſecondly*, in remitting the everlaſting puniſhment threatened to the ſinner in the world to come. The caſe of forgiveneſs being thus ſtated; the queſtion is, when our Lord ſaid, *Son, thy ſins be forgiven thee*, whether he meant the removing of a temporary puniſhment in this world, or the remitting of everlaſting puniſhment in the world to come. Now, tho' the words themſelves do not determine this matter to either ſide of the queſtion; yet if we take in the whole ſtory, we ſhall find it clearly determin'd to the former. For,

Firſt, This forgiveneſs was vouchſafed to the man, not only upon the account of his own faith, but alſo upon the account of the faith of them that brought him. *And Jeſus ſeeing* [*their*] *faith*, &c. that is, Jeſus ſeeing that the perſons, which brought the ſick man, were ſtrongly perſuaded, that he was both able and willing to heal him (which ſtrong perſuaſion was evident by their opening the roof of the houſe, and letting the man down thro' the tiling) *he ſaid to the ſick man, Son, thy ſins be forgiven thee.* Now as on the one ſide, when we conſider the terms propoſed in the goſpel for the remitting of everlaſting puniſhment, it is very unlikely, and unreaſonable, to ſuppoſe, that the man was diſcharged from that puniſhment, upon the account of other men's faith: ſo on the other ſide it is very likely and rational to ſuppoſe, that the man was deliver'd from temporary puniſhment, that is, was cured of the palſy, upon the account of the faith of thoſe that brought him; becauſe, as this was an anſwering the end

of

of their faith and practice, ſo it was a proper and ſuitable means to corroborate and ſtrengthen their faith in Chriſt. But this will be farther evident, if we conſider,

Secondly, Our Lord's queſtion to the *Jews*,, upon their ſuppoſing him to be guilty of blaſphemy. Saith he, *Whether is it eaſier to ſay to the ſick of the palſy, Thy ſins be forgiven thee; or to ſay, Ariſe, and take up thy bed, and walk?* Our Saviour, in the exerciſe of his miniſtry, cured all ſorts of bodily diſeaſes; and in ſo doing, he had given an abundant proof of his power or ability to forgive or deliver men from the temporary puniſhments they lay under for their ſins. Now, notwithſtanding this, the *Jews*, who catched at every occaſion of defaming him, were ſo unreaſonable as to think him guilty of blaſphemy, becauſe he ſaid, *Son, thy ſins be forgiven thee.* Upon which, our Lord replied to their reaſoning; *Whether is it eaſier to ſay to the ſick of the palſy, Thy ſins be forgiven thee; or to ſay, Ariſe, and take up thy bed, and walk?* As much as if he had ſaid; which is eaſier, to cure the man of his diſeaſe? or to give a ſenſible demonſtration of the truth of that cure? *But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to work ſuch a cure, he ſaith to the ſick of the palſy* (that is, to the man which had been ſick, and was juſt then healed) *Ariſe, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine houſe.* The man's riſing and carrying his bed was a ſenſible proof of his being cured of his diſeaſe, or of his being forgiven or deliver'd from the temporary puniſhment he lay under for his ſin; and conſequently of Chriſt's being poſſeſſed with a power to exerciſe that forgiveneſs. But this act of his, in riſing and carrying his bed, was not ſuch a ſenſible proof of the forgiveneſs of his ſins, with reſpect to everlaſting puniſhment in another world; and conſequently, that kind of

forgive-

forgiveneſs was not intended by our Saviour. Upon the whole, I think it very manifeſt, that when our Lord ſaid to the man ſick of the palſy, *Son, thy ſins be forgiven thee*; he meant by it, that he was diſcharged from the temporary puniſhment (*viz.* the palſy) which he lay under for his ſins; and conſequently, that the man was actually cured upon the pronouncing of theſe words, tho' he did not riſe from his bed 'till our Lord required him ſo to do, to give a ſenſible proof, to the ſtanders by, of the truth of that cure, and of his ability and power to effect it.

This point is farther illuſtrated by St. *James*, chap. v. 14. *Is any ſick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.* Verſe 15. *And the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick*; that is, it ſhall be effectual for his recovery from that temporary affliction which he lies under. *And the Lord ſhall raiſe him up*, *viz.* from that bed of ſickneſs upon which he is laid down. *And if he have committed ſins*, that is, if he have committed ſuch ſins for which this affliction is laid upon him as a puniſhment, *they ſhall be forgiven him.* That this is the meaning of St. *James*, is evident from the ſuppoſition [if he have committed ſins.] St. *James* tells us, *chap.* iii. 2. *That in many things we offend all*; therefore all have committed ſins as well the ſick, as the whole, in his account. Conſequently, there was no room for ~~him~~ to put this ſuppoſition [if he have committed ſins] with reſpect to ſins in general, becauſe all men have done ſo. And therefore the ſenſe of it is plainly this; if he have committed ſuch ſins for which this affliction is laid upon him, as a puniſhment in this world, they ſhall be forgiven him; that is, his affliction, or the temporary puniſhment which he lies under for them, ſhall be removed. To remit

everlaſting puniſhment to one man, merely upon the account of the prayer and faith of another man, is to diſregard thoſe terms upon which that forgiveneſs is propoſed in the goſpel; which are the faith, penitence, and obedience of the perſon forgiven. And therefore, by forgiving his ſins, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that St. *James* intends the delivering him from the temporary puniſhment, or affliction he lay under for them. And that this is his meaning, is farther evident by what follows, *verſe* 16. *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed*; that is, that ye may be deliver'd from thoſe afflictions which are laid upon you for thoſe faults. *The effectual fervant prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; that is, it availeth much towards the healing of thoſe that are afflicted, as aforeſaid. *Verſe* 17. Elias *was a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the ſpace of three years and ſix months.* Verſe 18. *And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.* Here we ſee what it was that *Elias*'s prayer was affectual for, not the inflicting or removing of everlaſting puniſhment in the world to come, but for the inflicting and removing of temporary puniſhment here in this world: *He prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not by the ſpace of three years and ſix months*; this was a temporary puniſhment, laid upon the houſe of *Iſrael*, for their ſins: *And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit?* This was forgiveneſs of ſin in this world, or a removing the temporary puniſhment which the *Iſraelites*, in this world, ſuffer'd for their ſins.

TRACT

TRACT VIII.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning Sinners deliverance from condemnation; wherein the caſe of *Chriſt's ſatisfaction* is conſidered, and inpartially ſtated, according to the *ſcripture* account of it.

BEFORE I enter upon this enquiry, I think it proper to make a few previous obſervations. And, *firſt*, I obſerve, that *ſin* is either a *doing* that which the light of nature, or divine revelation, makes a *crime*; or the *omitting to do* that which the light of nature, or divine revelation, makes a *duty*. Again, *ſecondly*, I obſerve, that as God is the original ſupreme cauſe of the being, and relations of things, upon whom we chiefly depend, and to whom we owe our higheſt obligations; ſo all ſin is *chiefly* and *primarily* committed againſt him. And as God is abſolutely independent, and ſelf-exiſting; ſo, when his creatures have ſinned againſt him, they are wholly at *his pleaſure* to be diſpoſed of as he ſees good. From which it will follow, by a neceſſary conſequence, that it is the right and property of God to uſe is pleaſure, either in *pardoning* or *puniſhing* the ſinner; and if he do puniſh for ſin, he is at liberty to exerciſe what kind, degree, or duration of puniſhment he thinks fit, provided the puniſhment do not exceed the demerit of the crime.

If it ſhould be objected, that the holineſs or rectitude of God's nature does diſpoſe him to hate ſin, and to manifeſt his diſpleaſure againſt it, by puniſhing the ſinner, if he obſtinately perſiſt in his folly, without repentance; and that the juſtice of God doth oblige him both to puniſh the ſinner, and proportion the puniſhment to the meaſure of the guilt contracted. I anſwer, Whether and how far the holineſs of God doth diſpoſe him to hate ſin, and to puniſh the ſinner, I ſhall not here enquire; becauſe if we allow what the objection ſuppoſes, yet ſtill he is at liberty either to pardon or puniſh, the ſinner as he ſees good or fit; becauſe thoſe diſpoſitions which are in God, ariſing from the rectitude of his nature, do not take from him the freedom of his will; and therefore, tho' God is diſpoſed to hate ſin, and puniſh the ſinner, becauſe his wiſdom is ſuppoſed to judge it beſt and fitteſt to do ſo, yet ſtill he is at liberty, with reſpect of his power, and will, to do otherwiſe. As to that part of the objection which reſpects his juſtice, I ſay, every being is left free, by the laws of common equity or juſtice, to diſpoſe of his own peculiar property as he will, and his not accountable to any for the uſe or non-uſe, the enjoying or not enjoying, or diſpoſing of the ſame. Seeing therefore that the right of puniſhing, or pardoning a ſinner, is God's peculiar property, in which no one is intereſted but himſelf, it will follow, that God may uſe his pleaſure, either in pardoning the ſinner, or puniſhing him to a greater or leſs degree, without being guilty of criminal injuſtice, provided the puniſhment doth not exceed the demerit of the crime (as I obſerv'd before) ſeeing no one is wrong'd by ſuch an adminiſtration, nor any occaſion given for a juſt complaint. *Thirdly*, I obſerve, that if God is pleaſed to puniſh the ſinner for his folly, there is nothing

nothing which the ſinner can do for himſelf, nor which any other can do or ſuffer for him, which in the nature of the thing can properly merit his exemption from puniſhment, or give a right to claim his diſcharge at God's hand. And here (which I deſire may be carefully obſerved through the whole following diſcourſe) I underſtand the word *merit* in the firſt and ſtricteſt ſenſe of that term, *viz.* that which in its own nature gives a legal right and title to what is ſuppoſed to be merited by it, conſidered as ſeparate from all grace and bounty pre-engagements, or promiſes of him who is the proprietor in what is thus merited, antecedent to that meritorious act. And,

Firſt, I ſay, there is nothing which the ſinner can do for himſelf which can thus merit any thing at God's hand; for as to repentance which conſiſts in a ſenſe and conviction of Guilt, a deep ſorrow, humiliation, and pain of mind that we have done amiſs, a confeſſion of our fault, and an actual forſaking it, tho' this may diſpoſe us for, and make us the ſuitable ſubjects of God's mercy, yet this doth not, in the leaſt meaſure, merit our diſcharge from puniſhment; becauſe as our repentance doth not take away or leſſen our guilt (we being equally as guilty after that repentance as before) ſo neither is that repentance any way profitable unto God, and therefore cannot bring him under any obligation unto us upon the account of it.

If it ſhould be here objected, that God's goodneſs doth diſpoſe, and in ſome ſort oblige him to diſcharge the ſinner upon his repentance, and therefore that repentance is meritorious. I anſwer, allowing what the objection ſuppoſes, *viz.* that God's goodneſs obliges him to diſcharge the penitent, yet this repentance doth not *merit* that diſcharge, but only diſpoſes and fits the perſon, who

exerciſes it, for God's mercy; for if repentance did *merit*, as aforeſaid, then God's obligation, to diſcharge the penitent, would not ariſe from his goodneſs, as the objection ſuppoſes, but from his juſtice, becauſe it would not be an act of goodneſs, but juſtice, for God to exerciſe it; the criminal might demand it as his right, and it would be an act of criminal injuſtice in God to withhold it from him; and therefore, if God's goodneſs doth oblige him to diſcharge the penitent, then this is ſomething in God himſelf which brings him under this obligation, and not any thing in the ſinner which *merits* it at his hand.

As to works of ſupererogation, or good works over and above duty, I think, properly ſpeaking, there is no ſuch thing; becauſe as God is the original ſupreme cauſe of the being and relations of all things, ſo I think he hath made it the duty of every rational conſcious being (even from the being and relations in which he hath placed them) to fill up the relations in which they ſtand, by doing every thing which is fit and proper to be done; and conſequently, every good work, which every derived rational conſcious being is capable of performing, comes within this general rule of duty, and law of God, founded in the being and relations, and ſo, in the reaſon of things. And likewiſe whatever is unfit or improper to be done, is a defect of duty from this rule. If there are any works which are neither fit nor unfit, neither proper nor improper, ſuch works are neither good nor evil, but are of an indifferent nature, and ſo are not within the preſent queſtion. But allowing, tho' not really granting, that there are ſuch good works which are over and above duty, yet ſuch good works cannot, in the nature of the thing, merit any thing at God's hand; becauſe, *firſt*, no being whatever can give to God any thing

thing but what is God's own, antecedent to that gift; for as all derived beings received their beings, and all that they are and have from God, ſo from hence it will follow, that if any one, or every one of theſe ſhould offer up themſelves, and all that they are or have, to God, they do but return to him his own; they give him that which he hath a greater intereſt in, and right to, than themſelves; and therefore the giving to God his own, cannot, in juſtice, be ſuppoſed to lay him under any obligation upon the account of it. *Secondly*, Whatever any one doth for God, he doth it by that ability which he originally recived from him, and conſequently can never oblige him by ſuch a performance. *Thirdly*, Whatever any one offers up to, or doth for God, cannot, upon any account, be profitable unto him, and conſequently cannot lay him under any obligation, which is the caſe of *merit*. Again,

I ſay, *ſecondly*, there is nothing which any *other* can do or ſuffer for the ſinner, which *originally*, *in the nature of the thing*, can merit his diſcharge from condemnation. That nothing, which any other can *do* for the ſinner, is, in this ſtrict and proper ſenſe, meritorious, appears from the reaſons laſt mentioned, *viz.* becauſe, *firſt*, there is nothing which any one can give to God, but what is God's own, antecedent to that gift; and, *ſecondly*, becauſe there is nothing which any one can do for God, but what is done by an ability and power originally received from him; and, *thirdly*, becauſe there is nothing which any one can give to, or do for God, which can, in any reſpect, be profitable to him; and conſequently, there is nothing which any perſon can do for the ſinner, which, in the nature of the thing, can merit any thing from God for him. So likewiſe neither is there any thing which any one can *ſuffer* for him, which, *in*

its own nature, can properly merit his diſcharge from condemnation. The truth of this will appear if we conſider, *firſt*, that as guilt is a perſonal thing, which cannot be tranſpoſed from one to another, and as it is very juſt that the guilty perſon ſhould bear his own burthen, by ſuffering the puniſhment due for his fault, and as the puniſhing or pardoning of the ſinner is the peculiar property of God; ſo if any one ſhould appear in the ſinner's behalf, and ſhould offer to make ſatisfaction to God for the offence committed, and ſhould ſuffer for him all that is poſſible to be ſuffered to that end; yet ſtill God is at liberty to reject whatever is thus ſuffered in the ſinner's behalf, and may juſtly puniſh him in his own perſon, notwithſtanding what hath been ſuffered for him in the perſon of another; it being no way contrary to juſtice to demand ſatisfaction from the offender, and to reject or refuſe ſatisfaction from any other hand. From hence it will follow, that there is nothing which any one can ſuffer for another, which, in its own nature, doth ſtrictly merit the ſinner's diſcharge; for if it did, in its own nature, thus merit, tho' God did not require ſuch ſuffering, yet it would be the ſinner's right to be exempted from puniſhment, and it would be an act of criminal injuſtice in God to lay any puniſhment upon him. But that God may puniſh the ſinner in his own perſon, and very juſtly refuſe what is done or ſuffered by another in the ſinner's behalf, I think no perſon, who underſtands what juſtice and equity is, will deny; and conſequently, there is nothing, which another can ſuffer in the ſinner's behalf, that, in the nature of the thing, can merit deliverance from him. The truth of this will farther appear, if we conſider, *ſecondly*, that there can be no ſuch thing as making ſatisfaction by another, in the preſent caſe; for tho' in the caſe of debt, another may make ſatisfaction for us, by

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fully repairing the damage we have done, or paying to the full what we owe, yet in the caſe of guilt it is quite otherways; for as no one can, in this caſe, undo what another has done, and as guilt cannot be tranſpoſed from one perſon to another, ſo the nature of the thing requires, that if any do ſuffer for ſin, it muſt be the guilty perſon, and he only; becauſe puniſhment, in the preſent caſe, is a chaſtiſing the fool for his folly, and a vindication of the juſt authority of God, which hath been affronted by the diſobedience of his creature; but if the puniſhment be tranſpoſed from the guilty to another who is ſubſtituted to ſuffer in his ſtead, then, in that caſe, the fool is not at all chaſtiſed for his folly, neither is the authority of God vindicated thereby, and ſo the ends of puniſhment are not at all anſwer'd. For as it is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that God puniſhes the ſinner for puniſhment's ſake, to gratify an angry paſſion; ſo if he ſhould puniſh the innocent in the guilty's ſtead, this would be ſo far from retrieving his honour, ſo as to repair the damage done by ſin, that on the contrary it would add to his diſhonour, by repreſenting him as unjuſt and unholy, in puniſhing the innocent, and letting the guilty go free. And tho' the perſon ſuffering ſhould voluntarily offer himſelf to ſuffer in the ſinner's behalf, it makes no alteration in the caſe, becauſe ſuch a voluntary offer makes no alteration in the ſinner; he is as guilty after it as before, and conſequently is as much the proper object of puniſhment as before. And the innocent perſon, as he doth not contract the guilt of the other, by that voluntary offer, he being as innocent as before, ſo that offer cannot make him the proper object of that puniſhment, and conſequently the ſuffering of the innocent cannot make ſatisfaction for the guilty. From the whole

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I think it plainly appears that there is nothing which the ſinner can do for himſelf, nor which any other can do or ſuffer for him, which, in the nature of the thing, can merit his exemption from puniſhment, or give a right to claim his deliverance at God's hand. Again,

Fourthly, I obſerve, that as the original right to pardon or puniſh the ſinner is the peculiar property or prerogative of God, and as there is nothing which the ſinner can do for himſelf, nor which any other can do or ſuffer in his behalf, which, in the nature of the thing, can merit his diſcharge; from hence it will follow, that it is wholly at God's pleaſure to give pardon upon what terms he will, and to require what qualifications he pleaſes in thoſe he thinks fit to make the objects of his mercy. Again,

Fifthly, I obſerve, that when God hath offered pardon to the ſinner, upon any terms, and under any qualifications, when thoſe terms are made good in ſuch ſort as God ordained, and when thoſe qualifications are attained which he required, then the perſon, which hath made good the terms required, hath a right, by virtue of God's promiſe, to claim forgiveneſs for the ſinner at God's hand; and it would be an act of criminal injuſtice in God to with-hold it from him. But then it ought to be remembered, that this right to claim pardon is not founded in merit, but in grace; for tho' when any one has made good the terms required, he then has a right to claim the pardon promiſed, yet that right is not founded upon the proper and original meritorioufneſs of theſe terms, but upon the free promiſe of God, which he has been pleaſed to make as a reward of grace to the performance of thoſe terms, the right of claim depending wholly upon that promiſe; becauſe if no ſuch promiſe had been

been made, then the performance of thoſe terms would have given no right at all. Again,

Sixthly, I obſerve, that whoever makes good the terms required for the ſinner, which God has promiſed pardon to, or whoever doth that with which God is ſo well pleaſed as to pardon the ſinner for its ſake, ſuch a one may fitly be eſteemed a ſaviour or redeemer to the ſinner; for tho' he hath not done that which, in its own nature, merits the ſinner's diſcharge, yet foraſmuch as he hath done what God requires and accepts as the condition of his mercy, or doth that which God is ſo well pleaſed with as to give the ſinner his pardon for its ſake, he is, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, a redeemer to the ſinner; becauſe he hath done what God required and accepted to that end, and becauſe the ſinner's actual deliverance is the iſſue and conſequence of it. Again,

Seventhly, I obſerve, that whatever God is pleaſed to make the condition of his mercy, or whatever is done which he is ſo well pleaſed with as to pardon the ſinner for its ſake, the performance, or doing of that thing, may, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, be called the price of that redemption, and the ſinner may be ſaid to be redeemed by it, or bought with it; for tho' the performance, or doing of that thing, doth not, in its own nature, *merit* the ſinner's diſcharge, yet foraſmuch as God is pleaſed to make thoſe terms the condition of his mercy, and to pardon the ſinner upon its account, the performance of thoſe terms becomes, by the free grace of God, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, the price of that deliverance. Again,

Eighthly, I obſerve, that whatever God is pleaſed to accept, as the price of the ſinner's redemption, the paying of that price may, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, and according to

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the common way of ſpeaking, be ſaid to *merit* that forgiveneſs; juſt as we uſe to ſay, when the prince advances the ſoldier to ſome high poſt for his ſervice in the wars, that he is advanced for his *merit*. Now tho' the ſoldier hath *merited* nothing by his ſervice, but his wages, when we uſe the word *merit*, in its firſt and moſt proper ſenſe, becauſe that wages is all that he covenanted for, and ſo is all that hath a legal right to claim, and is all that the prince is, in juſtice, obliged to give; yet foraſmuch as his good ſervice is ſuch as hath recommended him to his prince's favour, therefore thoſe good ſervices are ſaid, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, to *merit* that favour for him at his prince's hand. So in like manner whatever God is ſo well pleaſed with, as to pardon the ſinner for its ſake, that may, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, be ſaid to *merit* that forgiveneſs at God's hand. Thus much I thought proper to obſerve as previous to the following enquiry. But *note*, that when I ſay, God would be criminally unjuſt if he did ſo or ſo, I do not mean that he is guilty of the breach of a law, which he is obliged to ſubmit to by any ſuperiour authority, but only that he would act contrary to the univerſal rule of equity.

The ENQUIRY.

This Enquiry conſiſts of four general parts; *firſt*, whether the believing penitent ſinner will be delivered from condemnation; *ſecondly*, whether Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, has obtained that deliverance for him; *thirdly*, whether that deliverance is obtained by his ſufferings and death; *fourthly*, whether his ſufferings and death do, in their own nature, and in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, *merit* that deliverance, and are a full and equal ſatisfaction to God for the ſins and offences of all believing penitent ſinners. And,

Firſt,

First, I am to enquire, whether the believing penitent ſinner will be delivered from condemnation. But before I enter upon this enquiry, I think it proper to premiſe, *firſt*, what we are to underſtand by theſe terms, *viz. ſinner*, *condemnation*, *deliverance from condemnation*, *believing*, and *penitent*; as to the the term *ſinner*, I have, in my previous obſervations, ſhewn, that by ſin I mean the doing that which the light of nature, or divine revelation, makes a crime; or the omitting to do that which the light of nature, or divine revelation, makes a duty. Conſequently, whoever does, or omits to do, as aforeſaid, comes under the denomination of a ſinner. By the term *condemnation*, I underſtand that ſentence to puniſhment, which ſin has juſtly expoſed, and the righteous law of God hath bound the ſinner over to. By *deliverance from condemnation*, I underſtand the obtaining pardon and forgiveneſs from God, ſo as that the ſinner, with reſpect to a future ſtate, is wholly exempted from that puniſhment which ſin hath made him obnoxious to; and that he will be juſtified or acquitted at God's bar, and reſtored to God's favour, as if he had never tranſgreſſed. By *believing*, I underſtand *two* things; *firſt*, faith in; and, *ſecondly*, faithfulneſs to Jeſus Chriſt. Faith *in* him, is a being perſuaded, upon rational grounds, that the perſon, which the four Evangeliſts have given us the hiſtory of his birth, life, death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion, is the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that the good tidings which he proclaimed is true, *viz.* that God is in (or by) this Chriſt reconciling ſinful mankind to himſelf. Faithfulneſs *to* Jeſus Chriſt, is an honeſt profeſſion of his name and truth, a willing and faithful ſubmiſſion to his kingdom and government, a patient bearing of his croſs, and a perſevering in hope of the heavenly inheri-

tance.

tance. And as to the term *penitent*, I have, in my previous obſervations, ſhewn, that repentance conſiſts, *firſt*, in an awakening ſenſe of the evil nature, and the dreadful conſequences of ſin, and a conviction of our own guilt; *ſecondly*, in a deep ſorrow, humiliation, and pain of mind, that we have done amiſs; *thirdly*, in a confeſſion of our folly; and, *fourthly*, in an actual forſaking it; conſequently, whoever doth this, in ſincerity of heart, comes under the denomination of a *penitent*. Again, I premiſe, *ſecondly*, that as this and the following enquiries relate wholly to what is contained in the chriſtian revelation, ſo it is from that revelation alone we ſhall ſeek for ſatisfaction. Again, I premiſe, *thirdly*, that the perſons referred to, and intended by me in theſe enquiries, are ſuch as, at one time or other, have, or might have had (were it not their own fault) Chriſt revealed to them; for as no man can believe in him of whom he hath not heard, ſo his infidelity, if it may be ſo called, cannot be a crime; becauſe whenever faith becomes a duty, it is when the propoſition we are to aſſent to, hath, ſome way or other, been diſcovered and made known to us, or at leaſt might have been, had we not wilfully turned our backs upon it; therefore, what method God will be pleaſed to take with thoſe which never heard of Chriſt, as it is what we are not concerned in, ſo it comes not within the compaſs of our enquiry. Having premiſed theſe things, I come now to the enquiry, whether the believing penitent ſinner will be delivered from condemnation; which is anſwered in the affirmative, and I think will be ſufficiently proved, when I have ſhewn, *firſt*, that faith and repentance are ſuch qualifications as God hath required the ſinner to put on. *Secondly*, That if thoſe are wanting in him, he will be condemned. *Thirdly*, That they

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are ſuch qualifications in the ſinner, as God hath annexed pardon and ſalvation to. And, *firſt*, I am to ſhew, that faith and repentance are ſuch qualifications as God requires ſinners to put on; for this, ſee *John* xx. 31. *Theſe are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God.* Mark vi. 12. *They went out and preached, that men ſhould repent.* Acts xvii. 30. *But now commandeth all men every where to repent.* Mark i. 15. *Repent ye, and believe the goſpel.* Acts xx. 21. *Teſtifying both to the* Jews, *and alſo to the* Greeks, *repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Here we ſee that faith and repentance are what God requires from the ſinner. *Secondly*, If theſe are wanting in him, he will be condemned; for this, ſee *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believes not ſhall be damned.* John viii. 24. *Except ye believe that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Luke xiii. 3, 5. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Here we ſee, that where faith and repentance are wanting, the ſinner will be condemned. *Thirdly*, Faith and repentance are ſuch qualifications in the ſinner, as God hath annex'd pardon and ſalvation to; for this, ſee *Mark* xvi. 16. *He that believes, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* John iii. 16. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Chap. xx. 31. *Theſe are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.* Luke xxiv. 47. *That repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name.* Acts ii. 38. *Repent, and be baptized, for the remiſſion of ſins.* Acts iii. 19. *Repent and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out.* Chap. xi. 18. *Then hath God alſo to the* Gentiles *granted repentance unto life.* 2 Cor. vii. 10. *Godly ſorrow worketh repentance to ſalvation not to be repented of.*

Thus

Thus we ſee that faith and repentance are ſuch qualifications as God requires ſinners to put on; and that where theſe are wanting, the ſinner will be condemned; and that they are ſuch qualifications in the ſinner, as God has annexed pardon and ſalvation to. From all which it is abundantly evident, that the believing penitent ſinner will be delivered from condemnation. This being ſo,

I enquire, *ſecondly*, Whether Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, doth obtain that deliverance for him. This enquiry is alſo anſwered in the affirmative; for the proof of which, I offer the following teſtimonies, *John* iii. 17. *God ſent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, might be ſaved.* 1 John iv. 14. *The Father ſent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* 1 Theſ. i. 10. *Whom he raiſed from the dead, even Jeſus who delivered us from the wrath to come.* Here we ſee that the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation is obtained by Jeſus Chriſt. This being ſo,

I enquire, *thirdly*, Whether that deliverance is obtained by his ſufferings and death. This enquiry is likewiſe anſwered in the affirmative; and is ſufficiently proved by the following teſtimonies. *Matt.* xxvi. 28. *This is my blood of the* New Teſtament, *which is ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſins.* Rom. v. 9, 10. *Much more now being juſtified by his blood, we ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him; When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* Chap. viii. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died.* 1 Cor. xv. 3. *Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the ſcriptures.* Gal. iii. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us; for it is written, curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Eph. i. 17. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins.* 1 Tim.

ii.

ii. 6. *Who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.* Heb. ix. 26. *Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf.* 1 Pet. iii. 18. *Chriſt hath once ſuffered for ſin, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God.* Rev. v. 9. *For thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood.* Thus we ſee, from theſe texts, that the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation is obtain'd by the ſufferings and death of Jeſus Chriſt. Here, I think it proper to obſerve, that tho' the ſinner's deliverance is aſcribed to Chriſt's ſufferings and death, yet it is not aſcribed to them only, but alſo to his reſurrection and interceſſion. As *Rom.* iv. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification.* Chap. v. 10. *If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life.* Chap. viii. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died; yea, rather, that is riſen again;———Who maketh interceſſion for us.* Heb. vii. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come to God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* Here we ſee that the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation hath as great a dependence upon the prevailing interceſſion of Chriſt, as it hath upon his ſufferings and death; conſequently, his ſufferings and death do not alone obtain that deliverance, but it is obtained by Chriſt's prevailing interceſſion alſo. Having thus ſhewn, that the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation, is obtained by the ſufferings, death, and interceſſion of Chriſt.

I enquire, *fourthly*, Whether his ſufferings and death do, in their own nature, and in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, *merit* that deliverance, and are a full and equal ſatisfaction to the Father, for the ſins and offences of all believing penitent ſinners. This enquiry is two-fold. *Firſt*, Whether the

ſufferings and death of Chriſt do, in their own nature, ſtrictly and properly, *merit* that deliverance. I have, in my previous obſervations, ſhewn, that there is nothing which any one can do, or ſuffer for the ſinner, which originally, and in the nature of the thing, can *merit* his deliverance from condemnation, or give a right to claim a diſcharge for him at God's hand; conſequently, the ſufferings and death of Chriſt do not, in their own nature, and in this ſtrict ſenſe of the word, *merit* that deliverance; and ſo the enquiry is anſwered already. But becauſe this is a truth which the generality of chriſtians are, by education, cuſtom, and authority of others, ſtrongly biaſs'd againſt, therefore I think it proper to add two or three obſervations, as a farther proof of this point. And accordingly I obſerve, *firſt*, that what our Lord did and ſuffered, was in obedience to his Father's will. Thus, *John* iv. 34. *My meat is to do the will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work.* Chap. vi. 38. *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me.* Matt. xxvi. 39. *He prayed, ſaying, O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me; nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* John xviii. 11. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto* Peter, *put up thy ſword into the ſheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* Phil. ii. 8. *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* Heb. v. 8. *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he ſuffered.* Chap. x. 9. *Then ſaid he, Lo, I come, to do thy will, O God.* John x. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I may take it again----- This commandment have I received of my Father.* Here we ſee that what our Lord did and ſuffered, even unto death, was in obedience to his Father's will; conſequently, according to our Lord's own rule, *Luke* xvii.

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10. he did not ſtrictly, and with regard to God, *merit* any thing by his ſufferings and death at God's hand; and therefore God could not be brought under any obligation upon that account. Again, I obſerve, *ſecondly*, the ſcriptures expreſsly declare, that the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation is the effect of God's free grace and bounty. Now if it be free bounty, then it will follow, that Chriſt's ſufferings and death did not originally, and in the nature of the thing, *merit* that deliverance; becauſe theſe two, *merit* and *grace*, in this caſe, ſtand directly oppoſite one to the other. To be obtained by merit, and yet to be the effect of bounty and free grace, is a direct contradiction. That God doth exerciſe his mercy and grace in the forgiveneſs of ſin, ſee *Matt.* vi. 12, 14, 15. *Forgive us our debts--- Your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you,----Neither will your Father forgive your treſpaſſes.* Mark xi. 25. *When ye ſtand praying, forgive, that your Father alſo which is in heaven may forgive you your treſpaſſes.* Luke xxiii. 34. *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Acts xiii. 38. *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins.* Chap. xxvi. 18. *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of ſatan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins.* Eph. iv. 32. *Even as God, for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven you.* Col. ii. 13. *You hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all treſpaſſes.* 1 John i. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* Chap. ii. 12. *I write unto you, little children, becauſe your ſins are forgiven you, for his name ſake.* Rom. iii. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt,* Eph. ii. 8. *For by grace ye are ſaved, and*

that not of yourſelves, it is the gift of God. Here we ſee, that notwithſtanding all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffer'd for ſinners, yet the ſinner is juſtified or acquitted from condemnation *freely* by God's *grace*; it is the gift of God: God mercy and bounty is exercis'd in the forgiveneſs of ſins, which it could not be if the *ſufferings* and *death* of Chriſt did originally, and in their own nature, merit that deliverance; for then God's diſcharging of the ſinner would be a debt, which, in juſtice, he was obliged to, and not an act of grace which he freely and bountifully beſtowed upon his creatures. Again, I obſerve, *thirdly*, that there is a material difference betwixt a debt properly ſo call'd, and guilt, properly ſo call'd. A debt is an obligation which we have been ſome way or other brought under to another, which obligation we are, in ſtrict juſtice, required to make good. Guilt is an irregular diſorderly wicked act, either of the mind ſingly, or of the mind and practice in conjunction, by which we chuſe to do what, in reaſon and juſtice, we ought not, or chuſe to avoid what, in reaſon and juſtice, we ought to do. And as debt is an obligation which in ſtrict juſtice, we are required to make good, ſo, in many caſes, we are capable of receiving aſſiſtance from others to enable us to diſcharge our debt, by enabling us to make good our obligation; or we are capable of diſcharging our debt in the perſon of another, who may make good our obligation in our ſtead. Thus, for example, if a man ſhould contract a debt to his neighbour of ten pounds to be paid to him at a certain time, if when the time comes he finds himſelf unable to diſcharge the debt, becauſe he has but half the ſum, if another neighbour is pleas'd to give him five pounds for that purpoſe, in this caſe, he receive aſſiſtance from another to make ſatisfaction,

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by receiving an ability in part to make good his obligation. Thus, again, if one man ſhould contract a debt of labour to another, and the debtor ſhould not perform that labour in his own perſon, but ſhould employ ſome other who ſhould perform it fully for him according to the obligation, in this caſe the debtor would diſcharge his debt in the perſon of an another, who would make good his obligation in his ſtead. But with reſpect to *guilt*, it is quite otherways; for as guilt is an irregular wicked act, which deſerves a ſuitable correction, ſo, in the nature of the thing, there can be no other ſatisfaction made, to take off the guiltineſs of that act, than any actual perſonal ſuffering of that correction by the actor; becauſe as guilt cannot be tranſpoſed from one perſon to another, ſo if the innocent ſhould voluntarily take upon him to ſuffer correction in the guilty's ſtead, that guilt would remain as much uncorrected, as if the perſon ſubſtituted had not been corrected at all; and conſequently, there is nothing which Chriſt could do or ſuffer, which originally, in its own nature, could merit the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation. Upon the whole, I think it abundantly evident, beyond all rational contradiction, that the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation was not merited by the ſufferings and death of Chriſt, when we uſe the word *merit* in the firſt and ſtricteſt ſenſe of that term. Indeed, we freely and thankfully own, that, in a ſecondary and leſs proper ſenſe, the ſuffering and death of Chriſt merited the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation, that is the obedience which Chriſt exercis'd, when he became obedient unto death, was a rewardable conſideration with his Father, upon which he exalted him at his right hand, to be the Lord and head of his people, and to be their prevailing interceſſor, and that he pardons the believing penitent

tent for Chriſt ſake. But then this benefit, with regard to Chriſt himſelf, is the effect of God's freely accepting his ſuffering to that end; and with regard to the ſinner, it is a reward merely of grace and not of debt: it is what God's bounty is pleas'd to beſtow, and not what he is, in ſtrict juſtice, obliged to; which is the caſe of *merit*, in the firſt and ſtricteſt ſenſe of that term.

Secondly, I enquire, whether the ſufferings and death of Chriſt are a full and equal ſatisfaction to God for the ſins and offences of all believing penitent ſinner? Before I return an anſwer to this enquiry, I premiſe, that equal ſatisfaction is of two kinds, *viz. firſt*, ſuch as is equal to the damage or demerit of the offence; and *ſecondly*, ſuch as is equal to the demand of the damaged or offended. Thus, for example, ſuppoſe that one man ſhould damage another to the value of ten pounds, if the damager makes ſatisfaction to the value of ten pounds, then this is ſatisfaction of the firſt kind. But if the damaged will be pleas'd to demand no more for his ſatisfaction than the publick ſigning of an inſtrument, as a witneſs and memorial of the offender's acknowledging the damage done, and of the free grace and bounty of the offended in pardoning that offence; when the damager hath ſigned the aforeſaid inſtrument, according to the full intent and meaning of the offended, if the offended is fully ſatisfied therewith, then this is ſatisfaction of the ſecond kind. And this latter is as full and equal as the former; for as the former is full and equal to the damage or demerit of the offence, ſo the latter is full and equal to the demand of the damaged or offended. This being premiſed, I anſwer, that the ſon of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, did by his ſufferings and death make a full and equal ſatisfaction to his Father for the ſins and offences of all believing

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penitent ſinners; but then, I ſay, that this ſatisfaction was not of the firſt, but of the ſecond kind. That it was not of the firſt kind, I prove by this ſingle, but concluſive argument, *viz.* the Father's exerciſing his *mercy* in the pardoning and forgiving of ſins. To exerciſe mercy in the pardoning and forgiving an offender, is to remit the puniſhment in whole, or in part, which is due for the offence; but if the offender, or any other which is ſubſtituted to make ſatisfaction in is ſtead, ſhall do or ſuffer that which is, in the firſt and ſtrict ſenſe, a full and equal ſatisfaction to the demerit of the offence, then there is no room nor place for pardon or forgiveneſs to be exercis'd, becauſe there is nothing to be pardon'd or forgiven. Yet that the Father doth exerciſe his mercy and grace in the forgiveneſs of ſins, is what I have largely ſhewn already. But then I ſay, *ſecondly*, that Chriſt did make a full and equal ſatisfaction to the *demand* of his Father. The truth of which will appear by what follows, *viz.* the Father did propoſe that his Son ſhould thus ſuffer, and Chriſt voluntarily ſubmitted unto Death, to anſwer that propoſal; this I have proved already, when I ſhew'd, that what Chriſt died and ſuffer'd, was in obedience to his Father's will. I farther ſay, the Father was ſo highly pleas'd, and ſo fully ſatisfied with Chriſt's undertaking this performance, that he hath there upon appointed him to be an interceſſor for ſinners, and pardons the believing penitent for his ſake. For this, ſee *Phil.* ii. 8. 9. *He humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs: Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him.* Acts v. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand.* Rom. viii. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* Heb. vii. 25. *Wherefore he is*

able alſo to ſave to the uttermoſt thoſe that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them. Chap. ix. 24. *Chriſt is not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us.* Rom. iii. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* Eph. iv. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as God, for Chriſt's ſake, hath forgiven you.* 1 John ii. 1, 2. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our ſins, and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſins of the whole world.* Verſe 12. *I write unto you, little children, becauſe your ſins are forgiven you for his name's ſake.* Here we ſee that Chriſt's obedience unto death was ſo highly acceptable, and ſo ſatisfactory to his Father, that he thereupon exalted him at his right-hand, to be a prevailing interceſſor for ſinners, and pardons the believing penitent upon his account, and for his ſake; and conſequently his ſufferings and death were full and equal to the demand, and his Father was fully ſatisfied therewith; tho' it ought to be remembered, that this is not to be underſtood ſo * ſtrictly, as that God would have been abſolutely implacable to returning penitent ſinners, were it not for ſuch interceſſion and ſatisfaction.

Objections *with their* Answers.

Object. I. The ſufferings and death of Chriſt are *inſtrumental* towards ſinners deliverance from condemnation; but they could not be inſtrumental any other way than by *merit*, therefore they are ſo by merit. I anſwer, this is a miſtake. The ſufferings and death of Chriſt, are inſtrumental towards ſinners deliverance from con-

* See my diſcourſe on juſtification.

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demnation *three* ways, and yet are not ſo by merit; namely, *firſt*, as they are a *proper argument* with the *ſinner*, to turn from his ſins and return to his duty, and thereby he becomes the proper object of God's mercy; *ſecondly*, as they are an *argument with God*, to pardon the ſinner upon his return to him; and, *thirdly*, as they were a *ſacrifice* of *atonement* of God's own appointment, and ſo are a *ſign* and *pledge* of the ſinner's repentance, and God's forgiveneſs. And,

Firſt, The ſufferings and death of Chriſt are *inſtrumental* towards the ſinner's deliverance from condemnation, as they are a *proper argument* to bring him to repentance and reformation. As our Lord came into the world to proclaim the glad tidings, *viz.* that God would *pardon* and *receive to favour* all believing penitent ſinners; ſo his ſufferings and death had in them a *two-fold argument* to convince people of the truth of thoſe tidings; and, conſequently, were an *inſtrumental cauſe* of that faith and repentance, which diſpoſed them for God's mercy. For, *firſt*, they ſerved to convince men that Chriſt was *ſincere* in his pretenſions, there being not any thing which could more effectually convince people, that he was in earneſt, than his willingly foregoing all preſent enjoyments, and yielding up himſelf to ſufferings and death, in maintaining the cauſe he undertook. And as he declared himſelf a *heavenly* meſſenger, ſo, *ſecondly*, his *foretelling* his ſufferings and death, together with the *events* anſwering the predictions, were an evidence of the *divinity* of his miſſion; and both theſe afford a *proper argument* with the ſinner, to turn from his ſins that he may be ſaved. Sinners, whilſt under the prevailing *power* of their luſts, are ſet forth in ſcripture as *ſervants* and *captives* to ſin and ſatan, *Rom.* vi. 16, 17, 18. and Chriſt is repreſented as

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redeeming ſinners from that thraldom, by his *ſufferings* and *death*, *Tit.* ii. 14. 1 *Pet.* i. 18. and, tho' Chriſt did not pay down a *price* or *valuable conſideration* to ſin and ſatan, to whom men were in bondage; yet his ſufferings and death were as effectual for the ſinner's *deliverance*, as if he had been redeemed by a price, inaſmuch as they became a *prevailing argument* with the ſinner, to renounce ſubjection to his luſts, and to yield up himſelf a ſervant unto God. And this, in the language of the ſcripture, is called *redemption*, and being *bought* with a *price*; the expreſſions being uſed not properly but *figuratively*, the ſinner being as *effectually* delivered from the thraldom he was under, as if he had been redeemed by a price. Thus, God is ſaid to *redeem* the children of *Iſrael* by a mighty hand, out of the houſe of bondmen, from the hand of *Pharoah*, King of *Egypt*, Deut. vii. 8. not that God had paid down a price, or valuable conſideration to *Pharaoh*, for the children of *Iſrael*'s diſcharge, but he *forced* them out of *Pharaoh*'s hand, by his judgments; and this is called redemption, inaſmuch as the *Iſraelites* were as effectually delivered, as if they had been redeemed by a price. Again,

Secondly, The ſufferings and death of Chriſt are *inſtrumental* towards the delivering ſinners from condemnation, as they were an *act of obedience* to the Father's will, which ſo recommended him to his Father's love, that he hath exalted him at his right-hand, to be a *prevailing interceſſor* for ſinners; and ſo, thoſe ſufferings and death are an *argument* with *God*, to pardon the believing penitent, for Chriſt's ſake. This is what I have ſhewn above, in my diſcourſe of juſtification, and therefore it needs not to be enlarged upon here. Again,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The ſufferings and death of Chriſt are *inſtrumental* towards the delivering ſinners from condemnation, as they were a *ſacrifice* of *atonement* of God's own appointing, and, ſo, are at once a *ſign* and *pledge* of the ſinner's repentance, and God's forgiveneſs. All ſin is chiefly and primarily committed againſt God; and as God is at liberty to *pardon*, or *puniſh* the ſinner, as he ſees good, provided the puniſhment does not exceed the demerit of the crime; ſo, when he has been pleaſed to come to an accommodation with his creatures, he has, upon ſome occaſions, appointed that a ſacrifice of atonement ſhould be offered up to him. Thus under the *law*, *Lev.* iv. 31. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 18, 25. 2 *Chron.* xxix. 24. *a peace offering*, or *ſacrifice of atonement*, was offered up; and thus under the *goſpel*, Chriſt was made a *peace-offering*, or *ſacrifice of atonement* for ſin, *Rom.* v. 11. *Heb.* vii. 26, 28. *Chap.* ix. 11, 12. *Verſes* 26, 28. Not that this ſacrifice of atonement, in either caſe, did, in its *own nature*, merit God's mercy, becauſe there is not any thing which can be *done*, or *ſuffered*, which can *repair* the damage done by ſin, or which can be any way *profitable* to God; but as God had required it, in order to diſcharge the ſinner, then it became neceſſary to that diſcharge, and the ſinner is ſaid to obtain his pardon by it. From all which I think it appears, that the ſufferings and death of Chriſt are inſtrumental towards the delivering ſinners from condemnation, tho' not by merit, in the original and ſtrict ſenſe of that word.

Object. II. St. *Paul* ſaith, 1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20. *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price*, &c. And our Lord ſaith, *Matt.* xx. 28. *That he came to give his life a ranſom for many.* Here we ſee, that Chriſt did pay to God a *price*, or *valuable conſideration* for the breach of his law; and that

that the ſinners deliverance from condemnation was, in a proper and literal ſenſe, *merited* by Chriſt's ſufferings and death. I anſwer as before, that theſe are *figurative* expreſſions, like as what God ſaid to *Iſrael*, Iſaiah xliii. 3. *I gave* Egypt *for thy ranſom*; but *Egypt* was not given as a ranſom for *Iſrael*, becauſe it was *Egypt* they were in bondage to; but God gave *Egypt* to *deſtruction*, and wrought the *Iſraelites deliverance* thereby; and this, by a figure of ſpeech, is called a ranſom. In like manner, Chriſt gave his life a *ranſom* for many; not properly, becauſe God diſcharges the ſinner *freely*, forgiving him all treſpaſſes, *Rom.* iii. 24. *Col.* ii. 13. but *figuratively*, as Chriſt's death was *ſubſervient* to the ſinner's deliverance, as I have ſhewn above.

Object. III. If the ſufferings and death of Chriſt did not merit, or buy off the ſinner from condemnation, then they are of no more advantage, than the ſufferings and death of the *Apoſtles*, or any other *Martyrs*. Anſwer, As the rendering to all their due is a general rule or law of equity; ſo, I think, we ought to follow that rule in the preſent caſe. God is the *firſt mover*, Chriſt is the *prime inſtrument*, and the *Apoſtles* and others are *ſubordinate* inſtruments in the work of man's ſalvation, *John* iii. 16, 17. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life: For God ſent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world; but that the world, through him, might be ſaved.* 1 Cor. iii. 9. *We are labourers together with God; ye are God's huſbandry, ye are God's building.* Eph. ii. 20. *And are built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone.* James v. 20. *Let him know, that he which converteth a ſinner from the error of his way, ſhall ſave a ſoul from death,*

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and ſhall cover a multitude of ſins. Here we ſee, that as God's love is the *firſt moving cauſe*, and as Chriſt is the *prime inſtrument*; ſo every other perſon, who ſets forward the ſalvation of ſinners, is a *ſubordinate inſtrument* in the work of ſalvation; and yet this does not ſet their labours or ſufferings upon a *level*, becauſe they are not alike ſubſervient to that end.

Object. IV. If the foregoing account of ſalvation, by Chriſt, is true, then thoſe, who lived *before* Chriſt's time, would have no benefit by his death. *Anſwer*, Tho' the ſufferings and death of Chriſt could not be an argument with ſuch, to repent and return to God, yet they may be ſharers in the benefits of it; becauſe it could as well be a *ſacrifice* of *atonement* to thoſe who lived *before* Chriſt's time, as to thoſe who lived after it; and becauſe the benefits of his *interceſſorſhip*, the ground and cauſe of which was his obedience in doing and ſuffering unto death, may extend as well to thoſe who were *before* him, as to thoſe who were *after* him; and, upon this account, Chriſt might be ſaid to be *a lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world*; as in *Rev.* xiii. 8.

TRACT

TRACT IX.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning the Juſtice of GOD.

THIS Enquiry is three-fold; *firſt*, what juſtice is; *ſecondly*, what rules muſt be obſerved by thoſe that adminiſter it; and, *thirdly*, whether God is a juſt Being; after which are objections with their anſwers.

Firſt, What juſtice is? Juſtice is the balance of common equity, by which is weighed out, or diſpenſed, good and evil, in an equal proportion to the merit or demerit of things, or to any other right of claim that one being hath upon another: I ſay, to any *other* right of claim, becauſe there may be a right of claim without merit, as in the caſe of free promiſes; for when one perſon makes a promiſe to another, to give him ſome good thing, free and unconditional, he doth, by that act, confer on him not only a right to claim and expect, but alſo of receiving and enjoying the good thing promiſed to him. And though the making of that promiſe may only be an act of bounty, becauſe it is free and unconditional; yet the keeping of that promiſe is an act of juſtice, becauſe the benefactor is not free and at liberty, after ſuch promiſe is made. Again, juſtice is a mean, in the adminiſtration of good, between bounty and fraud, the balance of juſtice ſtanding upon ſuch an even poize, as that if it turn to one ſide it is bounty, if to the other it is fraud. Again, juſtice is a mean in the adminiſtration

ſtration of evil, between mercy and cruelty, the balance of juſtice ſtanding upon ſuch an even poize, as that if it turn to one ſide it is mercy, if to the other it is cruelty.

Secondly, What rules muſt be obſerved by thoſe that adminiſter juſtice? In order to adminiſter juſtice, according to the laws of common equity, every adminiſtrator muſt have regard to every juſt claim, ſo as that all may have their due. And here it is to be *noted*, that, by the laws of common equity, every one has right to diſpoſe of his own peculiar property, according to his own will, otherways the notion of property is deſtroy'd, or at leaſt the having a propriety in any thing cannot be a privilege; for all the advantage ariſing from property conſiſts in this, that the proprietor is free and uncontroulable in the uſing, enjoying, and diſpoſing of his own property, and is under no obligation, nor accountable to any, for the uſing, enjoying, or diſpoſing of the ſame. But tho' every one may diſpoſe of his own property, according to his own will, yet he has no right to diſpoſe of the property of another; therefore, in the adminiſtration of juſtice, two rules muſt be kept, according to the two different capacities the adminiſtrator may act in. The firſt rule is to be obſerv'd by him who hath no right or property concerned in the adminiſtration, but only acts by appointment. as an indifferent perſon. The rule is, he muſt keep the balance of juſtice upon an even poize, not varying a tittle on either ſide, whether in the adminiſtration of good or evil, but each party's right muſt equally be regarded; for, if either party is wrong'd, it becomes an act of criminal injuſtice in the adminiſtrator. The ſecond rule is to be obſerv'd by him who acts as a party concerned in the adminiſtration, and whoſe own property or right is as much concerned, as

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the right and property of him to whom juſtice is adminiſtered. The rule is, he muſt have a ſtrict regard to the right of him to whom juſtice is adminiſtered, ſo as not to break in upon it in the leaſt degree; if he adminiſter evil, not to exceed the demerit of the crime; if good, not to come ſhort of the merit of the thing rewarded; for in both caſes there is juſt ground of complaint, and the adminiſtrator becomes guilty of criminal injuſtice. But, in regard of his own right, he is left free, to exerciſe either bounty, in rewarding beyond the merit, or mercy, in puniſhing leſs than the demerit of the thing; and if this is unjuſt, as indeed ſtrictly ſpeaking it is, yet we conceive it is not criminal; yea, it would be ſo far from being a crime, that on the contrary it would be excellent and glorious, if the object be proper and ſuitable for that bounty or mercy to be exerciſed upon.

Thirdly, Whether God is a juſt Being? This is anſwered in the affirmative. The argument for it is taken from God's goodneſs, and ſtands thus; if God is a good Being, then God is juſt; but God is a good Being, therefore God is juſt. That God is good, is here taken for granted, as being allowed by all chriſtians. And that his goodneſs proves him to be juſt, appears by what follows. Juſtice is a negative virtue, and when we ſay that God is juſt, we only ſay what he is not, namely, that he is not criminally unjuſt. Here it is to be *noted*, that, in the exerciſing of juſtice, God ſtands in the capacity of a party concerned, that is, God's right and property is as much concerned in that adminiſtration, as the right and property of him to whom juſtice is adminiſtered; and in this capacity he only ſtands engaged, by the laws of common equity, to have regard to the right of him to whom juſtice is adminiſtered,

miniſtered, ſo as not to inflict more evil than the demerit of the crime, nor communicate leſs good than the receiver has a title to, by a juſt right of claim. As to his own property, I ſay, as before, that he is left free, by the laws of common equity, to diſpoſe of it as he will; ſo that he may communicate good, either without or beyond merit, which we call bounty, or he may remit or puniſh leſs than the crime deſerves, which we call mercy, without being criminally unjuſt; nay, it is ſo far from being a crime, that it is noble and glorious, when the object is proper and ſuitable for that bounty or mercy to be exerciſed upon. This being ſo, I ſay, that criminal injuſtice is inconſiſtent with God's goodneſs. For, that innate goodneſs, which dwells in God, is a bar to all fraud and cruelty; and God is ſo far from exerciſing fraud in with-holding that good which another has a right to claim from him, that he is rather diſpoſed, by his goodneſs, to confer that good which they have no right to, if the object be proper and ſuitable to receive it; that is, in other words, bounty is a conſequence of his goodneſs, but fraud is directly oppoſite to it. Again, God is ſo far from exerciſing cruelty, in puniſhing beyond the demerit of the crime, that he is rather diſpoſed, by his goodneſs, to exerciſe mercy in puniſhing leſs than the crime deſerves, if the object be proper and ſuitable for that mercy to be exerciſed upon; that is, in other words, mercy is a conſequence of his goodneſs, whereas cruelty is oppoſite to it. From hence it appears that God is a juſt Being.

Objections *with their* Answers.

Object. I. May not God, for the glorifying of his power, make creatures to be miſerable without demerit, and yet act according to the princi-

ples of juſtice, foraſmuch as the laws of equity or juſtice leave every being free to diſpoſe of his own property, as he will? ſeeing therefore God's creatures are his own, he may do what he will with them, without being chargeable with criminal injuſtice. *Anſwer*, Tho' they are his own, and receive their being from him, yet we conceive it would be ſtill criminal injuſtice in him to give them being for no other end, with reſpect to the creatures, but to make them miſerable; becauſe every being has a right, from common equity, to claim a continuance in its preſent ſtate, when its change will add to, or give being to its miſery, except its demerit cuts off that claim. Therefore, I ſay, that non-entity has a right, if we may ſo ſpeak, to continue ſo, when its receiving exiſtence ſerves only to make it miſerable; and it would be an act of criminal injuſtice to non-entity, to give it exiſtence to that end, becauſe non-entity is better, and rather to be choſen than a ſtate of miſery. And farther, I ſay, God will never glorify his power at the expence of his juſtice and goodneſs, when he can do it a thouſand ways conſiſtent with both.

Object. II. We ſee that the ſenſible creatures below us are capable of miſery, and do really ſuffer it, and yet have no demerit. *Anſwer*, As they receive evil, ſo they receive good from God's hand; and as we cannot know the meaſure of the evil they ſuffer, ſo neither can we know the meaſure of the good they enjoy; ſo that, for all we know, the good they receive is more than equivalent to, and a compenſation for the evil they ſuffer. So again we cannot know, whether they are without demerit; for as they have inferiour capacities, and as they, ſeeming to us, have a freedom in the uſe and exerciſe of them, ſo they may, for ought we know, contract an in-

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ſeriour guilt, in proportion to their inferiour capacities. Upon the whole, I ſay, ſeeing we are wholly ignorant of their caſe, we cannot determine ought concerning them, and therefore the objection is of no force.

Object. III. Doth not the unequal diſtribution of providence, as to good and evil, with reſpect to good and bad men, ſeem to imply an unjuſt hand in that diſtribution, ſeeing it often happens that bad men enjoy the good, and good men the evil of life? *Anſwer*, As to good men, that leſſer meaſure of good which they enjoy is all bounty, becauſe they have no merit; and that greater meaſure of evil which they ſuffer is ſtill mercy, becauſe it is leſs than their demerit; ſo then there is no criminal injuſtice, with reſpect to good men. And as to bad men, I ſay, that the greater good they enjoy is God's bounty; and foraſmuch as none are wrong'd by that adminiſtration, ſeeing God gives his own and not another's goods, there can be no criminal injuſtice in that adminiſtration. As to the leſſer evil which they ſuffer, that is God's mercy; and foraſmuch as none are wrong'd in the exerciſe of that mercy, it cannot be criminally unjuſt in God to exerciſe it.

Object. IV. God being in himſelf incomprehenſible, and his ways unſearchable, who dares preſume to ſay what he can, or cannot do? or what is agreeable or diſagreeable to his perfections, ſeeing his ways are in the deep, and his paths in the great waters, and his foot-ſteps are not known? tho' we may ſtate the notion of juſtice, goodneſs, truth, holineſs, and the like, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe, with relation to ourſelves; yet who can ſtate the notion of them, or be capable of judging when things are agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe in God? To pretend to

do this, is preſumptuous; 'tis looking into inacceſſible light, and meaſuring the ways of God by the finite line of human underſtanding. *Anſwer*, *Firſt*, That God is in himſelf incomprehenſible, and that the way of his providence is a great deep, which the line of human underſtanding, at preſent, doth not fathom, I readily grant: but then, I ſay, as in *Pſalm* xcvii. 2. that as clouds and darkneſs are round about him, which is the foundation of our aſtoniſhment, ſo righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of his throne, which is the foundation of our comfort. And therefore if there are ſome things, in the way of his providence, which ſeem to claſh, or to be contrary to thoſe divine perfections, which the light of nature hath ſufficiently demonſtrated, or divine revelation hath fully revealed to be in God, this doth not ariſe from ſuch a real claſhing, but from the ſhortneſs of our underſtanding, which cannot ſee thro', nor to the end of things; ſo that God is true, tho' every man be a liar: he is really good, juſt, holy, *&c.* and he cannot, or rather he never will, act contrary to theſe. I anſwer, *ſecondly*, That tho' God is incomprehenſible in himſelf, yet we may form a conception of what he is, as he ſtands related unto us. Tho' we cannot form a cenception of what the nature or ſubſtance of God is, if I may ſo ſpeak, yet we may and can form a conception of him, that he is a wiſe, powerful, juſt, good Being, and the like; becauſe he hath abundantly demonſtrated himſelf to human underſtanding to be ſuch, and therefore human underſtanding may, without preſumption, and ought to form a conception of theſe, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe in God; the truth of which will abundantly appear from the following conſiderations. *Firſt*, If human underſtanding cannot form a con-

conception of goodneſs, juſtice, truth, holineſs, and the like, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe, as they are in God, then vain and fruitleſs are all thoſe diſcoveries which God hath made of himſelf by revelation. He hath revealed himſelf to be a holy God, *Lev.* xix. 2. But if we may not be allowed to judge what holineſs is when applied to God, and what is agreeable or diſagreeable to it, then ſuch a revelation is of no manner of uſe to us. If the Lord hath declared himſelf to be, *the Lord God, merciful, gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth*, as in *Exod.* xxxiv. 6. To what end can this ſerve, if we may not be allowed to judge what mercifulneſs and graciouſneſs are, when applied to God, and what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe? Surely, all ſuch revelations are uſeleſs and vain, if they are above the reach of human underſtanding, or if it would be preſumption to diſcern and judge what is intended by them. *Secondly*, God is the proper object of our affections, and it is not only our duty, but alſo our happineſs to fear him, to love him, to delight in him, *&c.* Now whatever makes him to be the object of our affections, muſt be ſuch things in him as we do actually apprehend, and can form a conception of, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to them. It muſt be ſomething which we have an actual conception of, which muſt excite and raiſe theſe affections in us. We muſt conceive God to be a holy and powerful Being, and likewiſe what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe in him, or elſe we could not make him the object of our fear. We muſt form a conception of the goodneſs of God, and of his being ſo to us, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to it, as it is in God, or elſe we cannot make him the object of our love. *Thirdly*, God is propounded to us as the object

of our imitation. Thus St. *Paul*, *Eph.* v. 1. ſaith *Be ye followers of God, as dear children.* And our Lord, *Luke* vi. 36. ſaith, *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father alſo is merciful.* And St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* i. 15. ſaith, *As he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation, becauſe it is written*, Lev. xi. 44. and xix. 2. *Be ye holy, for I am holy.* Now if we may not be allowed to judge, or form a conception of what mercifulneſs, holineſs, and the like are, when applied to God, and what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe, then we can never make theſe, as they are in God, the object of our imitation, which we are expreſsly required in the ſcriptures to do. *Fourthly*, It hath been the practice of the beſt and wiſeſt men in all ages, to judge or form a conception of what juſtice, truth, holineſs, and the like are, and what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe, as they are in God. Thus *Abraham*, Gen. xviii. 23, 25. ſaith, *Wilt thou alſo deſtroy the righteous with the wicked?----that the righteous ſhould be as the wicked; that be far from thee; ſhall not the judge of all the earth do right?* Here we ſee plainly what conception *Abraham* had of juſtice and equity, as conſidered in God, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to it. *Deut.* vii. 9. *Know therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thouſand generations.* Again, *Pſalm* xi. 7. *The righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs; his countenance will behold the thing that is juſt.* Jer. ix. 24. *But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciſe loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſs in the earth; for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.* Here we ſee, that it is the proper ground of a man's glorying, that he is capable of diſcerning

cerning and judging what loving-kindneſs, judgment, and juſtice are, when applied to God, and what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe. *Heb.* vi. 10. *God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love.* God hath promiſed, by the mouth of his Son, *Mark* ix. 41. *That he that did give a cup of water to a diſciple to drink in Chriſt's name, becauſe he belonged to him, he ſhould not loſe his reward.* And the Apoſtle, referring to this promiſe, aſſures the believing *Hebrews* for their comfort, and to encourage them to perſevere in their duty, that God was not unrighteous (which otherways the Apoſtle ſuppoſes he would be) in that he did not forget to fulfil his promiſe, in rewarding their work and labour of love, which they had ſhewed towards his name, in that they had miniſtered to the ſaints, and did continue ſo to do. *Finally*, The ſtrength of St. *Paul*'s reaſoning with the *Hebrews*, chap. vi. 17, 18. depends wholly upon this, that they had a liberty, and could diſcern and judge what truth and faithfulneſs are as conſidered in God, and what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe, for, without the allowing of this, his reaſoning is of no force; for thus he there expreſſes himſelf, *God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſels, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us.* Here St. *Paul* aſſerts, that the oath, and promiſe of God, were two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie; and this impoſſibility of God's proving falſe to his promiſe, or to his oath, he makes the ground of their faith, hope, and comfort; which it could not be, if they could not, or if it were preſumption in them to judge

what truth and faithfulneſs are, when applied to God, and of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to theſe. *Fifthly*, and *laſtly*, It pleas'd God ſo far to condeſcend, as to appeal to the reaſon of mankind, and to call upon them to judge of the juſtice and equity of his dealings with them; thus, *Iſaiah* v. 3. *O inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *and men of* Judah, *judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.* Ezek. xviii, 25. *O houſe of* Iſarel, *is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?* Thus, I think, it ſufficiently appears, that we may not only form a conception of what God is, as he ſtands related unto us, without being guilty of preſumption; but alſo that it is both our duty and our glory ſo to do.

If it ſhould be here replied, that the ſcriptures give us a relation of many things that God ſaid and did, which, if brought to the bar of man's judgment, and there tried by the ſtandard of human reaſon, will appear to be contradictory to truth and juſtice: thus, 1 *Sam.* ii. 30. *I ſaid, indeed, that thy houſe, and the houſe of thy Father, ſhould walk before me for ever; but now the Lord ſaith, be it far from me.* Here we have an acknowledgmen tof the promiſe made to *Phinehas*, as in *Num.* xxv. 13. and likewiſe a declar'd reſolution to break that promiſe, contrary to the rules of truth and juſtice. Again, 2 *Kings* viii. 10. *And* Eliſha *ſaid unto him* (Hazael) *Go ſay unto him* (Benhadad *King of* Syria) *Thou mayeſt certainly recover; howbeit, the Lord hath ſhewed me, that he ſhall ſurely die.* Here we have two things aſſerted, which contradict each the other. Again, in the 89th *Pſalm* we have in one part of it a large account of the promiſes of God to *David*, and his poſterity; and, in another part of that *Pſalm*, is ſet forth the non-performance of thoſe promiſes, which is an impeachment of the truth and juſtice of God,

God. Again, *Iſaiah* xxxviii. 1. The Prophet tells *Hezekiah*, *that he ſhall die, and not live*; and then, at *verſe* 5. he tells him, *that he ſhould live fifteen years longer*, which makes the firſt delaration to be falſhood. Again, *Jer.* xv. 18. *Wilt thou be altogether to me as a liar, and as waters that fail?* Chap. xx. 7. *O Lord, thou haſt deceived me and I was deceived.* Here the Prophet *Jeremiah* charges God with deceit. Again, *Jonah* iii. 4. *Yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed*; and yet we find that this prediction fail'd. Theſe, and the like things, when tried by the ſtandard of human reaſon, will make God a liar, unjuſt, and the like. I *anſwer*, The ſeeming contradictorineſs of theſe, or any other ſuch, to truth and juſtice, doth not ariſe from their being tried by the ſtandard of human reaſon, but the contrary, *viz.* their not being tried by that ſtandard; for when men take in all the circumſtances which attend theſe, and exerciſe their reaſon thereupon then all theſe, ſeeming contradictions vaniſh; and it is mens's barely looking at theſe, without taking in the ſeveral circumſtances that attend them, and without exerciſing their reaſon upon them, which makes them appear thus contradictory. And this will appear from conſidering the ſeveral texts which the *objection* referreth to.

As to 1 *Sam.* ii. 30. *I ſaid indeed, that thy houſe and the houſe of thy Father, ſhould walk before me for ever; but now the Lord ſaith, be it far from me.* Hear the *objection* ſuppoſes that God fail'd of his promiſe to *Phinehas*, and ſo acted contrary to the rules of truth and juſtice. To this I anſwer, *firſt*, that by the terms *for ever, and everlaſting*, as it is expreſs'd in *Num.* xxv. 13. he could not reaſonably be ſuppos'd to imply any more than a long time; at moſt no longer than that diſ-

penſation

penſation the church was then under: and therefore, if the promiſe was made good to *Phinehas*'s poſterity for a long time, as indeed it was, from the time of its making, to the time when *Abiathar* was turn'd out of the prieſthood, 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27. which was upwards of 400 years; then it was fulfill'd in the letter of it, according to the ſenſe of thoſe words, *for ever and everlaſting* in the language of the ſcriptures. But ſuppoſing this was not a fulfilling of it in the letter of the promiſe, I anſwer, *ſecondly*, that the occaſion of this promiſe was *Phinehas*'s pious zeal for the honour of God, in endeavouring to put a ſtop to that whoredom and idolatry which the children of *Iſrael* committed with the *Moabites*; and the end of this promiſe was, that it might be as a reward to *Phinehas* for his good ſervice, and as an encouragement to him, and his poſterity, to perſevere in their duty. This being the caſe, I ſay, that neither *Phinehas*, nor his poſterity, could, with any colour of reaſon, ſuppoſe that God did intend to continue them in his extraordinary favour any longer than they did continue in their duty and obedience; or that the truth and juſtice of God could be concern'd to make good this promiſe to them any longer than they did continue to walk in his fear. The promiſe was made as an encouragment to duty, which it could not be if God was obliged by it to continue them in his extraordinary favour, when they did live in a ſtate of rebellion againſt him. Again, I ſay that as this promiſe was made to *Phinehas* and his iſſue, who were thoroughly acquainted with the method of God's dealing with the children of *Iſrael*, and thoſe many promiſes and threats which he made to them; ſo they could not but know, that God's promiſes and bleſſings did be-

belong to them no longer than they walked in his commandments, and that when they did caſt off the Lord, the Lord would caſt off them. This being ſo, I farther ſay, that they could not but know, that God did bind himſelf by this promiſe to them, only ſo far, and ſo long as they continued to walk in the ſteps of *Phinehas*, their father, to whom this promiſe was made; and it is plain that *Eli* himſelf underſtood it ſo to be, as appears, by his reaſoning with his ſons, *verſe* 25. *If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him; but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* Again, I ſay, that as God gave them this promiſe, by the mouth of *Moſes*, ſo he alſo fully acquainted them by the mouth of the ſame *Moſes*, in what ſenſe they were to underſtand this, and all other promiſes which God gave to the children of *Iſrael*, as in *Deut.* vii. 9, 10, 12. *Know therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments to a thouſand generations; and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to deſtroy them. He will not be ſlack to him that hateth him; he will repay him to his face.*——*Wherefore it ſhall come to paſs, if ye hearken to theſe judgments, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God ſhall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he ſware unto thy fathers.* Thus we ſee, that as God, by the mouth of *Moſes*, acquainted *Phinehas* with his will, *that he gave unto him his covenant of peace. and to his ſeed after him, even an everlaſting covenant*, Num. xxv, 12, 13. So he likewiſe acquainted him, by the ſame *Moſes*, that this covenant was to be made good unto them, if they did love him, and keep his commandments, and that otherways God ſtood no way engaged to them by his promiſe. This being the caſe, I ſay, that as *Phinehas*'s iſſue had no reaſon

reaſon, nor right, to claim an intereſt in this promiſe, if they did not continue in their duty; ſo neither did God act contrary to the rules of truth and juſtice, if, for their diſobedience, he did take from them what he had promiſed to them.

As to the caſe of *Benhadad* King of *Syria*, 2 Kings viii 10. *And* Eliſha *ſaid unto him* (Hazael) *Go, and tell him* (Benhadad(*thou mayeſt certainly recover howbeit the Lord hath ſhewed me. that he ſhall ſurely die.* To this I anſwer: when the Prophet bid *Hazael* tell his maſter, that he might live, this was true, becauſe this reſpects his diſtemper; his illneſs was ſuch as would not prove mortal to him, and in that reſpect he might certainly recover: but foraſmuch as God foreſaw that *Hazael* would murder *Benhadad*, therefore the Prophet ſaid, *the Lord hath ſhewed me, that he ſhall ſurely die.*

As to the caſe, in *Pſalm* lxxxix. where, in one part of the *Pſalm*, are largely ſet forth the promiſes, of God to *David*, and his poſterity; and in another part is ſet forth the non-performance of thoſe promiſes, which the objection ſuppoſes to be an impeachment of the truth and juſtice of God. To this I *anſwer*, That as in one part of the *Pſalm* are ſet forth the promiſes of God to *David*, and his iſſue; ſo the ſacred hiſtory hath largely ſet forth the fulfilling of theſe promiſes to *David* and his ſeed, and ſo hath ſufficiently vindicated the truth and juſtice of God in this reſpect; and as to what is contained in the other part of the *Pſalm* referr'd to, this doth not, in the leaſt, prove God to be worſe than his promiſes, for that the ſacred hiſtory hath fully clear'd; and therefore the moſt that this can be ſuppoſed to prove, is the *Pſalmiſt*'s diſtruſt and fear, that God would not fulfil his promiſes to them, ſeeing, to outward appearance, all things at that time ran the contrary way. An inſtance like this we have in *Pſalm*

cxvi.

cxvi. 11. where *David* ſaith, *I ſaid in my haſte, all men are liars*; or as he expreſſes himſelf in 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 1. *I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of* Saul *Samuel* had ſaid, that *David* ſhould be King of *Iſrael*, and had anointed him for that dignity, by the appointment of the Lord; but when *David* was forc'd to fly from *Saul*, and was in great jeopardy of his life, he then began to conclude, that this promiſe would not be made good to him, becauſe he expected to fall as a ſacrifice to *Saul*'s malice; and this made him to ſay in his haſte, *that all men were liars*, that is, that *Samuel*, as well as others, had deceived him, Now tho' *David* ſaid in his haſte that *Samuel* had lied to him, in the name of the Lord, yet this was no proof that God had fail'd of his promiſe made to *David* by *Samuel*, for God did, in his good time, bring him to the kingdom; but all that this proves is, that *David*'s faith and hope fail'd in the day of his diſtreſs. So in the caſe before us, here is a large account of God's promiſes to *David*, and his ſeed; and here is likewiſe an account of the *Pſalmiſt* complaining of the non-performance of theſe promiſes to them. Now tho' the *Pſalmiſt* did thus complain, this is no proof that God was falſe and unjuſt to them, for God did actually fulfil theſe promiſes to them; and all that this proves is, that the *Pſalmiſt*, in their adverſity, when the courſe of God's providence was againſt them, did diſtruſt, and fear that God would fail of making good his promiſes to them: I ſay, this is the moſt that can be pretended to be proved from this place. But I think the true ſtate of the caſe is this; the *Pſalmiſt* recounts the promiſes of God and the preſent circumſtance of the affairs of *David*'s family, and from thence he draws an argument to plead with God for their protection and deliverance; for thus he expreſſes himſelf, *verſe* 46. *How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thy face for*

ever

ever? and, verſe 49. *Lord where are thy former loving-kindneſſes, which thou ſwareſt unto* David *in thy truth?* An inſtance like this we have in *Jacob*, who when he was diſtreſs'd with fear that his brother *Eſau* would deſtroy both him and his ſubſtance, then made uſe of God's promiſe, as an argument to plead with God for his protection, *Gen.* xxxii. 9——12.

As to the caſe of King *Hezekiah*, Iſaiah xxxviii. 1. *In thoſe days was* Hezekiah *ſick unto death*; *and* Iſaiah *the prophet, the ſon of* Amos *came unto him, and ſaid unto him, Thus, ſaith the Lord, ſet thy houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die and not live.* Verſe 4. 5. *Then came the word of the Lord to* Iſaiah, *ſaying, Go and ſay to* Hezekiah, *thus ſay the Lord, the God of* David, *thy Father, I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeen thy tears*; *behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years:* I anſwer, what the Prophet ſaid unto the King, *verſe* 1. was true, *that he ſhould die, and not live*; but then we are to remember that the Prophet did not pronounce this as a judiciary ſentence from the Lord, but only as a Friendly warning of the King's danger. The hiſtory informs us that *Hezekiah was ſick unto death*, that is, he was ſick of ſuch a diſeaſe, as, according to the natural and ordinary courſe of things, would prove mortal, and ſo would end in the King's death; this being the caſe, the Lord ſent the Prophet on this friendly errand, to acquaint the King with the danger that he was in, from that diſtemper he was under; and to let him know, that it would, according to the natural courſe of things, end in his death; and that he ought to ſet his houſe in order, and prepare for his change; which is as much as if the Prophet had ſaid, I am come to acquaint thee with the danger of thy preſent illneſs; therefore ſettle the affairs of thine houſe, for the diſtemper thou art labour-

labouring under is ſuch, as, according to the natural and ordinary courſe of things, will prove mortal to thee, and end in thy death; for the words, *thou ſhalt die, and not live*, do ſignify no more than, thou wilt die and not live; and this *ſhalt* or *wilt*, did not ariſe from a judiciary ſentence which the Lord had given out againſt him, but from the nature and malignity of his diſtemper, as I obſerv'd before; and thus *Hezekiah* underſtood it; and therefore, knowing that God was the God of nature, and that it was in his power to bring back from the grave, and being ſenſible that he ſhould die in the midſt of his age, and without any iſſue to ſit upon his throne, he turn'd his face, unto the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept ſore; upon which the Prophet was ſent a ſecond time, to acquaint *Hezekiah*, that the Lord had heard his prayer, and ſeen his tears, and that he would exerciſe his miraculous power and grace in rebuking his diſtemper, and would add unto his days fifteen years.

As to the caſe of *Jeremiah*, chap. xv. 18. *Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?* I anſwer, the Lord, when he called *Jeremiah*, and ſent him to proclaim his word to the people of *Judea*, bid him, *chap.* i. 8. not to be afraid of their faces; and then he promiſed him, for his comfort and encouragement, ſaying, *I am with thee, to deliver thee, ſaith the Lord.* This promiſe was made good to *Jeremiah*; for the Lord was with him always, either to preſerve him from, or to deliver him out of all diſtreſſes; but yet God was pleas'd ſometimes to try the faith and patience of *Jeremiah*, by leaving him, for a long time, in the hand, and under the burden of his perſecutors; and this was the caſe at this time, as appears from *Jer.* xv, 15. *O Lord, thou knoweſt, remember me,*

and

and viſit me, and revenge me of my perſecutors: And, *verſe* 18. *Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuſeth to be healed? Wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?* Theſe then are the groans of *Jeremiah* under his burden, and his deſire that God would appear for his help, and no longer diſappoint his hope and expectation.

As to the other complaint of *Jeremiah*, Chap. xx. 7. *O Lord, thou haſt deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art ſtronger than I, and haſt prevailed:* I anſwer, The caſe plainly appears to be this; *Jeremiah* had cried, or proclaimed the word of the Lord to the people of *Judea*; but it was ſo far from having any good effect upon them, that on the contrary they made it, and *Jeremiah* on the account of it, the ſubject of their mockery and deriſion daily, *verſes* 7. 8. Upon this, the Prophet reſolv'd that he would make no more mention of God to them, nor ſpeak any more in his name, *verſe* 9. but tho' he had thus reſolv'd not to ſpeak to them any more, in the name of God, yet God thought fit to diſappoint or deceive his reſolution, in that he would not ſuffer him to ſit ſtill, and let them alone in their folly, *verſe* 9. *But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones; and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay*; that is, he could no longer refrain from declaring the word of the Lord to the people. So that God's deceiving of *Jeremiah*, and his being ſtronger than he, was his deceiving or diſappointing and overcoming his reſolution of not ſpeaking any more in the name of God, and it was not any failure of prediction, as ſome have imagined.

As to the caſe of *Jonah*, chap. iii. 4. *Yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed*; I anſwer, the end of all divine threatening is the preventing the evil

evil threatened, either by preventing that ſin and folly which makes men the objects of divine diſpleaſure, or elſe by bringing them to that repentance which makes them the objects of God's pardoning mercy; and therefore when *Jonah* preach'd, *yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed*, it was plainly to be underſtood in that very threatening, that if the *Ninevites* did repent, and turn to God, it would be a means of preventing the evil threatened, for otherways that threatening would not have been given; for the *Ninevites* might juſtly have reaſon'd thus, If God had ſo determin'd the deſtruction of our city, and if he did intend that his threatening ſhould be ſo underſtood as that nothing ſhould hinder the executing of it, then there was no need of this threatening, nor of his care in ſending his Prophet ſo long and tedious a journey to publiſh it; becauſe it could anſwer no good end, nor be of any manner of uſe to us; and therefore it is juſt and reaſonable for us to infer from this very threatening, that God hath ſent his Prophet in kindneſs to us, to warn us of our danger, and ſo bring us to that repentance and reformation which may avert the evil threaten'd; and it is plain that the *Ninevites* did thus underſtand the threatening; for if they had underſtood it ſo that God would not, upon any terms, avert the evil threatened, then this threatening would effectually have driven them to deſpair, but it could not have brought them to repentance, which we find it did. If it ſhould be here replied, what is this to ſalve the truth of God, who ſaid, expreſsly, *yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed*, when at the ſame time he foreſaw that it would not be deſtroy'd? I anſwer, as God foreſaw that *Nineveh* would not be deſtroy'd, ſo he foreſaw that the threatening that deſtruſtion would be the very means by which it would be prevented; and therefore when God

ſaid, *yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroy'd*, he could not, with any colour of reaſon or juſtice, be ſuppoſed to intend any more by his threatening than this, *viz.* that as the *Ninevites*, by their ſin and folly, had made themſelves the objects of God's diſpleaſure, ſo, if they did not repent and turn to God, his patience and long-ſuffering ſhould be exercis'd no longer than forty days more towards them. And as this is a juſt interpretation of God's threatenings, from the nature and reaſon of the thing, ſo it is agreeable to that declaration which God made by *Jeremiah*, chap. xviii. 7---- 10. *At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to deſtroy it; if that nation, againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what time I ſhall ſpeak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant it; if it do evil in my ſight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them.*

Thus we ſee that thoſe texts, which the objection ſuppoſes to impeach God of falſhood and injuſtice, when they are tried by the ſtandard of human reaſon, are very conſiſtent with both. May we all ſo know the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, as that we may be conformed to his likeneſs, and may be changed from glory to glory, as by the ſpirit of the Lord:

TRACT

TRACT X.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning Infinite juſtice, and infinite ſatisfaction.

THIS enquiry is two-fold, *firſt*, whether there be any ſuch thing as *infinite juſtice?* and, *ſecondly*, whether there be any ſuch thing as *infinite ſatisfaction?*

Firſt, Whether there be any ſuch thing as infinite juſtice? In order to anſwer this enquiry, it is neceſſary to ſtate the notions both of infinite, and of juſtice. Infinite, is that which is without *meaſure*, *bounds*, or *limitation*, and to which there can be *no addition*. Juſtice, is the balance of *common equity*, by which is weighed out or diſpenſed *good*, and *evil*, in a proportion exact and equal to the *merit*, or *demerit* of things, or to any other right of claim. So that juſtice, in the adminiſtration of good, is the exact *mean* between bounty and fraud; the balance of juſtice ſtanding upon ſuch an even poize, as that if it turn to one ſide it is bounty, if to the other it is fraud: and the exerciſing either bounty, or fraud, in the adminiſtration of good, is a *breaking* the balance of juſtice, that is, it is *unjuſt*, ſtrictly ſpeaking. Again, juſtice, in the adminiſtration of evil, is the exact mean between mercy and cruelty; the balance of juſtice ſtanding upon ſuch an even poize, as that if it turn to one ſide it is mercy, if to the other it is cruelty: and the exerciſing of either mercy or cruelty, in the adminiſtration of evil, is a breaking the balance of juſtice, that is,

it is unjuſt, ſtrickly ſpeaking. This being ſo, it follows, that juſtice admits of no ſuch diſtinctions as finite or infinite, becauſe in juſtice there are no degrees; juſtice being the ſame in all its acts, none is greater or leſs than others, all and every of its acts, being equally great alike: for in the adminiſtration of evil, it is as great an act of juſtice to proportion a leſſer evil to a leſſer crime, as it is to proportion a greater evil to a greater crime: it is the higheſt act of juſtice in an inferiour magiſtrate to puniſh the ſmalleſt offence with a proportionable puniſhment: and it is the loweſt act of juſtice, even in the ſupreme God, to puniſh the greateſt offence with a proportionable puniſhment; juſtice being the ſame in both caſes, *viz.* an equaling the puniſhment to the demerit of the offence. Juſtice may be adminiſtered by a finite, or by an infinite being, and it may be adminiſtred to a finite, or to an infinite being, but ſtill juſtice is the ſame in either: and if we do ſuppoſe an infinite crime (for crimes do admit of degrees, ſome are greater, ſome are leſs) I ſay, ſuppoſing we do admit of an infinite crime, all that juſtice is concern'd to do, with relation to this infinite crime, is to proportion a puniſhment in an exact equality to the demerit of this infinite offence: and there is as much as this done in proportioning a puniſhment in an exact equality to the leaſt offence poſſible. The caſe is the ſame with relation to juſtice in the adminiſtration of good; from all which it appears, that there is no ſuch thing, properly ſpeaking, as infinite juſtice.

Secondly, Whether there be any ſuch thing as infinitive ſatisfaction? In order to anſwer this enquiry, it is likewiſe neceſſary to ſtate the notions of infinite, and of ſatisfaction. Infinite is, as I have

have ſaid, that which is without meaſure, bounds, or limitation, and to which there can be no addition. Satisfaction is the anſwering to the full the demand of another, whether that demand be juſt or unjuſt, finite or infinite. Juſt demands, are ſuch as are exactly proportionable to the damage or demerit of the offence, or to the merit of the thing rewarded, or to any other right of claim. Unjuſt demands are ſuch as are not thus proportionable, but are either greater or leſs than the damage or demerit of the offence, or the merit of the thing rewarded, *&c.* Finite demands are ſuch as are limited, and are capable of being extended to a greater degree. Infinite demands are ſuch as are without bounds, or limitation, and are uncapable of any extenſion or addition. From which it appears, that infinite ſatisfaction ſuppoſes an infinite demand, and an infinite demand, if the demand be juſt, ſuppoſes an infinite crime, or an infinite merit, or ſome other right of claim equally infinite. We will only conſider this matter, as it relates to an infinite crime, becauſe the caſe is the ſame, when applied to infinite merit, or to any other right of claim. Now with relation to a crime, it is very uncertain whether there be any ſuch thing as an infinite crime. For, *firſt*, the committing a crime againſt an infinite being does not make that crime infinite; and this will appear, if we conſider that the crimes which are committed againſt God, who is an infinite Being, do admit of degrees, ſome are greater, ſome are leſs, whereas in infinity there is no ſuch thing as degrees. We read, 1 *Kings* xvi. 25. *Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worſe than all that were before him.* And, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 9. *Manaſſeh made* Judah *and the inhabitants of* Jeruſalem *to err, and to do worſe than the heathen whom the Lord had deſtroyed before the children of* Iſrael. 2 Tim.

iii. 13. *Evil men and ſeducers ſhall* (or will) *wax worſe and worſe*, &c. *Secondly*, It is a queſtion, whether a finite being can be guilty of an infinite crime, ſeeing the committing a crime againſt an infinite being does not make it ſo? *Thirdly*, Suppoſing that a finite being can be guilty of an infinite crime, yet it remains a queſtion, whether there has been any ſuch infinite crime ever committed; becauſe it is a thing above our faith and knowledge, whether the greateſt crime that was ever committed, even the ſin of the devil himſelf, was infinitely aggravated, and to which there could be no farther degree of aggravation added? For, that is properly an infinite crime, which is without bounds, or limitation, and to which there could be no degree of aggravation added, to make it yet more criminal. Seeing then that it is ſo very uncertain, whether there be any ſuch thing as an infinite crime, it will follow, that it is equally uncertain, whether there be any ſuch thing as an infinite demand, and conſequently whether there be any ſuch thing as an infinite ſatisfaction.

Some farther OBSERVATIONS.

Foraſmuch as the juſtice of God is often referr'd to, in certain controverſies, it may not be amiſs here to obſerve ſome common miſtakes relating thereto. *Firſt*, that God is, in juſtice, abſolutely and neceſſarily obliged to puniſh the breach of his laws either in the offender, or in ſome other that ſhall be ſubſtituted to ſuffer in the place of the offender. *Secondly*, That he which is ſubſtituted to ſuffer in the place of the offender, muſt ſo ſuffer, in the his ſuffering ſhall be ſtrictly, and in the nature of the thing, equal to the demerit of the crime. Theſe premiſes being taken for granted as true, from hence it hath been inferr'd, *Thirdly*, That he which ſuffers, in the ſinner's behalf, muſt be,

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in all points, equal to, and the ſame as the ſupreme lawgiver; or elſe, ſay they, he cannot ſo ſuffer as to ſatisfy divine juſtice, nor can the ſinner be diſcharg'd upon his account. The foregoing premiſes being taken for granted to true, and the foregoing inference being ſuppoſed to be juſtly drawn from them, it has been farther concluded, *Fourthly*, That foraſmuch as the ſinner is acquitted upon the account of the ſufferings of Chriſt, therefore Chriſt is, in all points equal to, and the ſame as the ſupreme God the Father; for otherways, ſay they, his ſufferings would not have been ſo ſatisfactory, neither would the ſinner be diſcharged upon their account.

But as the foregoing premiſes are erroneous, ſo are the concluſions too haſty, which are drawn from them. For ſuppoſing God is, in juſtice, obliged to puniſh for the breach of his laws, and ſuppoſing his juſtice could not be ſatisfied, except the ſuffering was ſtrictly equal to the demerit of the crime, which are both miſtakes; becauſe if God is obliged to puniſh for ſin, yet this obligation ariſes not from his juſtice, but from his truth and holineſs, and becauſe it lies wholly in the breaſt of the lawgiver, to demand what ſatisfaction he pleaſes for the breach of his laws, provided the demand does not exceed the demerit of the crime. But, I ſay, ſuppoſing the premiſes to be true; yet it does not follow from hence, that he which ſuffers, in the ſinner's behalf, muſt be in all reſpects the ſame as the original lawgiver, but the contrary. For if God is obliged, by the laws of equity or juſtice, to act ſo ſtrictly in this caſe then it will follow, *firſt*, that the perſon ſuffering muſt be neither ſuperiour, nor inferiour, but *exactly equal to*, and in all reſpects the ſame as the *offender*; becauſe the ſufferer is ſubſtituted to fill up the the place of, or perſonate the offender and

not the offended. *Secondly*, The ſuffering or puniſhment muſt be for kind, meaſure, and duration, neither greater nor leſs, but *exactly equal* to the *demerit* of the offence. Seeing then that it was man which tranſgreſſed, it will follow, that he which is ſubſtituted to ſuffer, in man's ſtead, muſt be neither ſuperiour, nor inferiour, but exactly equal to, and in all points the ſame as man; or elſe his ſufferings will not ſatisfy divine juſtice, neither will the ſinner be diſcharged upon their account. But the truth is, God is not obliged, from the principles of juſtice, to make any of the foremention'd demands, as has been made evident in the foregoing enquiry, concerning the juſtice of God; but he may require, or may accept what puniſhment, or what ſatisfaction he himſelf alone, in his infinite wiſdom, ſhall think fit.

TRACT

TRACT XI.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning FAITH and MYSTERIES:

OR,

A four-fold enquiry; *firſt*, what faith is; *ſecondly*, what the object of faith is; *thirdly*, what a myſtery is; *fourthly*, whether a myſtery is the object of faith.

FIRST, What *faith* is? In order to anſwer this enquiry, it is to be obſerved, that as the underſtanding has *truth* for its object; ſo alſo there are various ways by which truth is conveyed to the underſtanding; namely, *firſt*, by our *external ſenſes*, *viz.* ſeeing, hearing, feeling, taſting, and ſmelling. For example, that honey is ſweet, is a truth which is conveyed to the underſtanding by our external ſenſe of *taſting*. *Secondly*, Truth is conveyed to the underſtanding by our *internal ſenſes*, that is, by the reflections of the mind. For example, that there is a God, is a truth which is conveyed to our underſtandings by *reflection*. God is a Being which is *immaterial*, and ſo is not the object of our external ſenſes; therefore our external ſenſes cannot convey that to our underſtandings, which comes not within their reach;

within their reach; but when we ſee the viſible creation, which is the work of God, we do, by reflecting, diſcover its maker; and ſo this truth, that there is a God, is convey'd to our underſtandings by our internal ſenſes, *namely*, our reflecting powers, or, in other words, by our reaſon. *Thirdly*, Truth is convey'd to our underſtandings by ſuch report or teſtimony of others; for *example*, that there was ſuch a man as *Julius Cæſar*, is a truth which is convey'd to our underſtandings by ſuch report; for *Julius Cæſar* died long before any perſon now living was born, and conſequently no perſon now living can be informed of this truth by an external perception of his perſon; and our reflecting powers alone cannot diſcover to us that there was ſuch a man; conſequently, it is impoſſible that our underſtandings ſhould be informed of this truth, if it were not ſome way or other convey'd to us by the report or teſtimony of others. Now as truth is convey'd to our underſtandings different ways, ſo the act of the underſtanding, in the apprehending of truth, is called by different names, from thoſe different ways of conveyance. When truth is convey'd to our underſtandings by our external, or by our internal ſenſes, then, in propriety of ſpeech, this is called *knowledge*. And when truth is convey'd by the report or teſtimony of others, then, in propriety of ſpeech, it is called *faith*. Not but that theſe terms are commonly uſed promiſcuouſly, being put one for the other; for we often call that *knowledge*, which, properly ſpeaking, is an act of believing; and we likewiſe call that *believing*, which, to ſpeak properly, is an act of knowledge. And in all theſe, the act of the mind is the ſame, *viz.* the apprehending of, and aſſenting to any thing as truth, from the information that it hath received, either from

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our external or internal ſenſes, or from the report and teſtimony of others. And it is ſo far, and only ſo far an act, either of knowledge or belief, as our underſtandings do apprehend and aſſent to it; for, what our underſtandings do not apprehend and aſſent to is neither an act of knowledge nor belief, becauſe that cannot properly be called an act of the underſtanding, as knowledge and faith are, which our underſtandings do not perceive. So then faith, in propriety of ſpeech, and when diſtinguiſhed from knowledge, is that act of the underſtanding, which aſſents to any thing as truth, barely upon the credit of him that reports it: I ſay, barely upon the credit of the reporter, becauſe if any truth is reported to us by another, which upon reflection appears to be ſelf-evident, or which is made ſo our external ſenſes, then the act of the underſtanding, in aſſenting in ſuch a caſe, cannot properly be called faith, becauſe that act does not wholly ariſe from ſuch report. And here it may not be amiſs to obſerve the common diſtinction between human and divine faith. Human faith is an aſſent to a credible propoſition, merely upon the teſtimony of man, the juſt ground of that aſſent being the ability of the teſtifier to know the truth of what he teſtifies, and his honeſty in teſtifying what he knows; which, becauſe we can have no abſolute aſſurance of, we can have no abſolute reliance on the truth of any purely human teſtimony. I ſay, it is an aſſenting to a thing credible, upon the forementioned ground; becauſe if we aſſent to a thing incredible, or to a credible thing, when we have not juſt ground for that aſſent, this, I think, is not properly called faith or believing, but credulity or preſuming. Divine faith is an aſſent to a propoſition revealed by God, who, being omniſcient, cannot be ignorant of the thing revealed, and being

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ing the God of truth, cannot deceive us with a lie.

Secondly, What the object of faith is? In anſwer to this enquiry, I obſerve, that the object of faith may be conſidered in a three-fold reſpect; *firſt*, what a man ought to believe; *ſecondly*, what he does believe; and, *thirdly*, what he can, or is capable of believing. *Note*, I here refer only to divine faith. *Firſt*, A man *ought* to believe all thoſe divine propoſitions, whoſe ſenſe and meaning hath been revealed or made known to his underſtanding, or that might have been, were it not ſome way or other his own fault; which propoſitions have ſuch evidence accompanying them, as, in reaſon and juſtice, proves them to be divine or from God; and therefore all ſuch propoſitions, in this reſpect, are the object of faith. *Secondly*, A man *does* believe all thoſe divine propoſitions, whoſe ſenſe and meaning he actually aſſents to the truth of; and therefore, in this reſpect, all ſuch propoſitions are the object of faith. *Thirdly*, What a man *can*, or is capable of believing. This likewiſe may be conſidered in two reſpects; *firſt*, what he can believe, if all impediments were removed; *ſecondly*, what he can or is capable of believing in the preſent circumſtances of things, that is, while thoſe impediments are ſtill remaining. *Firſt*, A man can, or is capable of believing, ſuppoſing all impediments remov'd, all divine propoſitions; and ſo, in this reſpect, all ſuch propoſitions are the object of faith. *Secondly*, What a man can, or is capable of believing in the preſent circumſtances of things, which ſuppoſes the impediments to faith, ſuch as ſloth, careleſsneſs, prejudice, the propoſition being delivered in an unknown tongue, and the like, ſtill remaining; the object of faith, in this reſpect, being what we are at preſent enquiring after.

after. To this I anſwer, that a man can, or is capable of believing all thoſe divine propoſitions, and only thoſe, the ſenſe and meaning of which are revealed to his underſtanding, ſo far, and to that degree, as they are thus revealed. Thus, for *example*, God hath declared that he will judge the world. Now all thoſe men, whoſe underſtandings are informed of the ſenſe and meaning of this propoſition, can believe, that is, they are capable of giving their aſſent to this truth [that God will judge the world] but all thoſe men, whoſe underſtandings are not informed of the ſenſe and meaning of the aforeſaid propoſition, ſuch men cannot aſſent to, or believe it, whilſt they continue in that uninformed ſtate; becauſe faith follows, but never goes before the underſtanding; we firſt underſtand the ſenſe and meaning of the propoſition, and then believe it, or aſſent to the truth of it, and we cannot believe the leaſt tittle, 'till it be firſt apprehended by the underſtanding. This is evident from the nature of faith; for as faith is an aſſent of the mind, to the truth of a propoſition, convey'd to the underſtanding by the report or teſtimony of others; ſo this aſſent neceſſarily pre-ſuppoſes, that the underſtanding is informed of, or apprehends the thing which it aſſents to, there being no ſuch thing in nature as the believing an unintelligible propoſition. To aſſent to we underſtand not what is, in reality, no aſſent; and therefore if the fore-mentioned truth, *viz.* that God will judge the world, had been declared in ſuch a language, or in ſuch a manner, that mankind could not, or did not diſcern what God Almighty did ſignify and intend by it; as this, properly ſpeaking, would not have been a revelation, becauſe there is nothing diſcovered or made known by it; ſo no man could poſſibly have given his aſſent to

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the truth of it, whilſt he remained thus ignorant, becauſe there was no truth diſcovered or revealed for him to give his aſſent to. And ſuppoſing that the perſon, employ'd to make the foremen-tioned declaration, had given ſight the blind, feet to the lame, health to the ſick, and life to the dead, and had done all that was neceſſary, or that could be done, to prove his meſſage to be from God; yet ſo long as men remained igno-rant of that meſſage, or ſo long as their under-ſtandings remained uninformed of the ſenſe and meaning of it, ſo long they were utterly incapa-ble of giving their aſſent to the truth of it, In-deed, they may believe this meſſage to be divine, from the evidence which attended it, and they may be aſſured, from natural reaſon, that all di-vine propoſitions are true, and conſequently that the forementioned propoſition is true in the ſenſe of the propoſer; but then this is no more than a general faith in divine propoſitions at large, and not a particular act of faith in the ſenſe and meaning of the forementioned propoſition. The ſenſe and meaning of this propoſition is, that God will judge the world; but they being wholly ignorant of this meaning, it makes them wholly incapable of giving their aſſent to this truth, *viz.* that God will judge the world. They believe at large, that all God reveals is true, and, as a con-ſequence of this general faith, they believe every particular divine propoſition to be true in the ſenſe of the revealer, tho' they do not underſtand what the ſenſe and meaning of that propoſition is; but this is not a particular act of faith in the truth contained in that propoſition, but only a general faith in God, that all he ſaith is true. Thus the Diſciples of our Lord believed what the Prophets had ſpoken was from God, and they doubtleſs were perſuaded that all divine propoſi-

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tions were true, and conſequently all that the Prophets had ſpoken was true in the ſenſe of the propoſer; but yet as they did not underſtand what the ſenſe and meaning of thoſe propheeies were, which related to the ſufferings, death, and reſurrection of Chriſt, ſo they did not aſſent to, or believe them. So far as they were ſlow to underſtand, ſo far they were ſlow to believe what the Prophets had ſpoken. And this our Lord upbraided them with, *Luke* xxiv. 25. ſaying, *O fools, and ſlow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets*, &c. And as the ſhortneſs of their faith was occaſioned from the ſhortneſs of their underſtandings; ſo our Lord, to cure this evil, and remove this infidelity, helped their underſtandings, by explaining to them *thoſe* prophecies, and giving them the ſenſe and meaning of them, *verſe* 27. *Beginning at* Moſes *and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the ſcriptures, the things concerning himſelf:* Or, as it is ſaid, *verſe* 45. *He opened their underſtandings, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures*, ſaying unto them, *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer*, &c. And in ſo doing he made that the object of their faith, or made them capable of believing it, which before was not ſo.

Again, I ſay, a man can aſſent ſo far, and to ſuch a degree, as things are thus reveal'd to his underſtanding, and no farther; that is, he can extend his aſſent ſo far as his underſtanding, goes into things, and no farther. For ſuppoſe God had made a declaration to men, which they underſtood but in part, then, I ſay, they can aſſent to but part of that declaration, *viz.* to that part they do underſtand the ſenſe and meaning of; and they muſt ſuſpend their aſſent to the other part, 'till ſuch time as they do underſtand it. For *example*, ſuppoſe this propoſition [*bittry* is *mittry*] was contain'd

tain'd in God's Word; and ſuppoſe theſe two terms *bictry* and *mictry* have no known ſignification; I ſay, ſo far as our underſtanding goes into this propoſition, that is, ſo far as we do apprehend the ſenſe and meaning of it, ſo far we are capable of believing it, and no farther. That *bictry* [is] *mictry* we apprehend, that is, we apprehend that God uſes theſe two words to expreſs one and the ſame thing, and this we believe or aſſent to, becauſe God hath declar'd that he doth ſo. But then, as we do not underſtand what either of theſe terms do ſignify, ſo we cannot believe the leaſt tittle about the thing itſelf, which is expreſs'd by them; and conſequently we can believe but part of the foregoing propoſition, *viz.* that part which we do underſtand; and, as to the other part, we muſt ſuſpend our aſſent, 'till ſuch time as we do underſtand one or other of theſe terms: I ſay, one or other, becauſe if we underſtand one of them, then we ſhould underſtand the whole propoſition; as ſuppoſe it was expreſs'd thus [*bictry* is defamation] here, as we underſtand that *bictry* and defamation expreſs the ſame thing, ſo we likewiſe underſtand what *bictry* means, *viz.* the blaſting a perſon's reputation; and conſequently, we can aſſent to the truth of all the propoſition, becauſe we do underſtand it wholly.

Again, If God declares a thing but in part, and does not declare the whole of the thing, in ſuch a caſe our aſſent can alſo extend no farther than to that which is declar'd; for *example*, God hath declar'd, that there ſhall be a reſurrection from the dead, but hath not declar'd the preciſe time *when* that great work ſhall be effected; here, ſo far as God as reveal'd this matter to us, we can believe it, *viz.* that he will raiſe the dead; but when he will do it, as the [*when*] is not reveal'd, ſo it is what we cannot aſſent to. The preciſe time,

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when God will raiſe the dead, is a ſecret, which is not yet diſclos'd, and therefore we are incapable of believing it; ſo that as far as we are ignorant of things, ſo far our aſſent muſt be ſuſpended, let what will be the ground of that ignorance, and conſequently of the infidelity occaſion'd by it, whether careleſneſs, prejudice, or any other cauſe; whether it be our misfortune, or our crime, the caſe in this reſpect is the ſame if we are ignorant; and ſo far as we are ſo, ſo far, in the preſent circumſtance of things, we are incapable of giving our aſſent to the truth of any propoſition whatever. Upon the whole, I think it abundantly evident, that in the preſent circumſtances of things, which ſuppoſe the impediments to faith remaining, a man can, or his capable of believing all thoſe divine propoſitions, and only thoſe, which are reveal'd to his underſtanding, and which he doth actually apprehend the ſenſe and meaning of; and only ſo far, and to that degree, as they are thus apprehended; therefore all ſuch propoſitions, and only ſuch, in this reepect, are the object of faith.

Thirdly, What a myſtery is? In anſwer to this enquiry, I ſay, the word *myſtery*, as I conceive, in its proper ſenſe, ſignifies a *hidden thing*. Any thing which is ſpoken to us, which we do not underſtand, is called a *myſtery*, that is, it is to us hidden or conceal'd; and any thing which is done, that we do not conceive *how*, or in *what* manner it is done, the manner of the doing of that thing is alſo call'd a *myſtery*; becauſe *how*, or in *what* manner it is done, is hid from us; not but that the word *myſtery* is often uſed in an improper ſenſe, and that in ſeveral reſpect; as, *firſt*, when a thing is ſpoken or done in ſuch a manner, as that it is difficult to conceive and apprehend it, this is often call'd a myſtery, whether we apprehend it, or not. *Secondly*, That which was not diſcover-

able by human reaſon, without the help of divine revelation, is likewiſe call'd a myſtery, after it is reveal'd and underſtood; thus the grace of God in Chriſt to mankind, and that the *Gentiles* ſhould be ſharers in this grace, is call'd a myſtery, which had been hid from ages and generations, but now was made manifeſt by the preaching of the goſpel. *Thirdly*, Any thing which was a myſtery, before we did apprehend it, is likewiſe improperly call'd a myſtery, after we do apprehend it; not that it is then really ſo, but becauſe it was ſo, antecedent to our apprehending of it. But when the word *myſtery* is applied to any thing that we do actually underſtand, I think it is ſo only in an improper ſenſe, and that, ſtrictly ſpeaking, a myſtery is properly that which our underſtandings do not actually conceive or apprehend.

Fourthly, Whether a myſtery is the object of faith? *Note*, By the object of faith, in this place I do not mean with reſpect to what a man ought to believe, nor what he can, or is capable of believing, ſuppoſing all impediments were remov'd but only with reſpect to what a man does believe or is capable of believing, in the preſent circumſtances of things, which ſuppoſe the impediments to faith ſtill remaining. This being premiſed, in anſwer to the enquiry, I ſay, we need only make application of what hath been obſerved already, under the former heads. For 'tis evident, *firſt*, when the word *myſtery* is uſed in a proper ſenſe, then a myſtery is not the object of faith, a myſtery being that which we do not apprehend, and the object of faith, being always that which we do apprehend. Indeed, that, which is a myſtery may become the object of faith, when it is apprehended, but then it ceaſes to be a myſtery properly ſo call'd. *Secondly*, When the word *myſtery* is uſed in an improper ſenſe, then it may be the

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object of faith, or it may not. If it be improperly uſed to ſignify a thing difficult to be underſtood, then, if we de actually apprehend that difficult thing, it is the object of faith, becauſe we do actually apprehend it; but if we do not apprehend it, then it becomes a myſtery in a proper ſenſe, and ſo is not the object of faith. Again, if the word myſtery be improperly uſed to ſignify that which was not diſcoverable by human reaſon alone, without the help of divine revelation; if the propoſition is apprehended by us, it is the object of faith; but if it is not actually apprehended by us, it is then a myſtery in the proper ſenſe, and ſo is not the object of faith at all, whilſt it thus continues hid from us. Again, if the word *myſtery* be improperly uſed to ſignify that which was a myſtery, before it was apprehended, and is ſo called after it is apprehended, upon that account, then it is the object of faith always. So then upon the whole it appears, that a myſtery, properly and ſtrictly ſpeak ing, is not the object of faith, while it continues ſo; and likewiſe what a weak excuſe men make, when they excuſe the obſcurity, abſurdity, and contradiction of their opinions with this plea, that 'tis a myſtery, and that, as ſuch, it is our duty to believe it, and not curiouſly to ſearch into it; becauſe ſay they, myſteries, at leaſt myſteries in religion, are above the reach of human underſtandings, and therefore to be believed, and not reaſon'd upon.

If to what is here ſaid it ſhould be replied, that there are ſeveral articles of faith, which, as chriſtians, we are obliged to aſſent to, and which we do actually exerciſe our faith upon, and yet we do not apprehend them, ſo that they are myſteries in a proper ſenſe; ſuch as the conception of our Saviour in the womb of the Virgin, by the power of the holy Ghoſt, the reſurrection of the body,

and the like. For how the bodily part of our Saviour was generated in the womb of the Virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, without the concurrence of a man, and how our ſcattered duſt ſhall be gather'd and united to compoſe the ſame body, are myſteries which we are not able to ſee thorough; and yet the conception of our Saviour, and the reſurrection of the body, are articles of our common creed, and ſuch as we all profeſs to give our aſſent to; and conſequently a myſtery, properly ſo called, is the object of faith, I anſwer, that there are many things related, which contain in them what is above the reach of human underſtanding, and which we do not actually apprehend, and ſo are myſteries in a proper ſenſe, I readily grant; but that the myſterious parts of thoſe truths are the object of faith, to this I deny. Faith, as I ſaid before, is the aſſenting to any thing as truth, barely upon the credit of the revealer. Now we can never be ſaid to aſſent to that which we have no idea of. To aſſent to we underſtand not what is abſurd. Therefore when any thing is declar'd to us which hath a myſtery contain'd in it, or that which is not, or cannot be apprehended by us; it is not the myſterious part, but the reveal'd part which we are required to give our aſſent to. Thus, that the bodily part of our Saviour was conceived in the womb of the Virgin, by the power of the holy Ghoſt; this is what is reveal'd, and what we apprehend, and ſo is not a myſtery, properly ſo call'd, and this is what we are requir'd to give our aſſent to. But the myſterious part, *viz.* how, or in what manner the Holy Ghoſt did perform this operation, this is not reveal'd, and this we cannot conceive or apprehend, and this we are required to give our aſſent to. So again, that there will be a reſurrection of the dead, this is reveal'd, and this we apprehend

or have an idea of, and this we are requir'd, and can give our aſſent to; but the myſterious part, *viz.* how God, by his almighty power, will gather our ſcatter'd, duſt, and unite it in the ſame body, this is not reveal'd, and this we cannot conceive or apprehend, and this we are not requir'd, nor can we give our aſſent to it. Beſides, *knowledge* and *faith* ſtands upon the ſame foot in this matter, ſo that we may, as properly, be ſaid to know myſteries as to beleive them. Thus, that one grain of ſeed is encreas'd into many, this is what we know, that is, we know that the ſeed is caſt into the earth, and that takes root downward, and bears fruit upward, firſt the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; this we know, that is, our underſtandings by obſervation are inform'd of this truth, by the external ſenſe of ſeeing; and yet how nature does perform its office; in this matter, is a myſtery, at leaſt it is ſo to the greateſt part of mankind. For as it is not viſible to their ſight, and as it is not reported unto them, ſo alſo they do not diſcover it by reflection, and conſequently cannot properly be ſaid to know it; and yet they do as truly, and as properly, know this myſtery, as they do beleive the myſterious part of the reſurrection. From all which it appears, that myſteries, properly ſo call'd, are not the object of faith; and that 'tis a moſt unjuſt miſrepreſentation, when men, who cannot perceive that ſuch or ſuch a particular doctrine is at all revealed in holy ſcripture, are charged with denying their aſſent to ſuch a doctrine, merely becauſe they cannot, by their reaſon, comprehend *how* it can be.

TRACT XII.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning the Uſe of Reaſon in Matters of Revelation.

BY *reaſon*, or the reaſoning faculty, I underſtand that *reflecting power* of the mind, by which we are enabled to diſcern and judge of the fitneſs or unfitneſs, of the agreement or diſagreement, of the good or evil, and of the truth or falſhood of things. This being premiſed, I ſay, that reaſon and faith are always to be exerciſed in their proper places, and never to interfere one with another, or to be ſet up one above, or one againſt the other; ſo that we are always to render to reaſon the things that are reaſon's, and unto faith the things that are faith's. There are ſome truths which are in *reaſons province*, and faith has nothing to do with them; ſuch as the *firſt* propoſition in religion, *viz. that there is a God.* When we would ſatisfy our minds of the truth of this propoſition, we conſult our reflecting reaſoning faculty, as the only means to obtain that ſatisfaction by; becauſe to pretend to ſeek ſatisfaction, from the written word of God, is to take the thing for granted which we ſeek for, *viz. that there is a God.* We muſt *firſt* be perſwaded that God is, before we can be perſwaded that he has any revelation for us to ſeek ſatisfaction from, in any caſe whatever. Now this is not a ſetting up reaſon above, or in oppoſition to faith, but only an exerciſing of reaſon in its

its proper place: and it appears, from what as been already obſerved, that faith hath nothing to do in this matter. Again, there are ſome truths which are in *faith's province*, and reaſon have nothing to do with them, that is, reaſon is not emyloy'd in ſatisfying our underſtandings of the truth of them ſuch as that *the bodily part of our Saviour was not produced into being by the agency of a man, in the ordinary courſe of generation; but by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, in an extraordinary way.* Now if we would ſatisfy our minds of this truth, we muſt have recourſe to *revelation*, as the only means to obtain ſatisfaction; it being utterly impoſſible for our reflecting powers to ſatisfy our minds of the truth of ſuch matters of fact as this is. And this is not ſetting up faith above, or in oppoſition to reaſon; but the only an exerciſing of faith in its own province. And it is plain, that reaſon is unconcern'd in this matter.

But tho there are ſome truths, the certainty of which depends wholly upon revelation, and reaſon is unconcern'd in perſwading our minds of the truth of them, yet ſtill reaſon is of a two-fold uſe in all matters of revelation. *Firſt*, To diſcern and judge of the *Evidence* that is given to prove any revelation to be from God; for if our reaſon is not to be exerciſed in this caſe, then we are laid open to every impoſer; and it would be our duty to receive every thing for divine truth, that the reporter has the impudence to affirm is the word of God. *Secondly*, Our reaſoning powers are to be exercis'd in diſcerning and judging what is the *mind* of *God*, contained in that revelation which we own to be his word; for otherways we ſhall be obliged to contrary practices, and to beleive contradictions, and the like. Thus, *Proverbs* xxvi. 4. *Solomon* forbids, ſaying, *Anſwer not a fool according to his folly, leſt thou be like unto him;*

him; and then in the next *verſe* he commands ſaying, *Anſwer a fool according to his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit.* Here we ſee, according to the ſtrict letter of the text, we are forbidden and commanded the ſame practice; and if we may not exerciſe our reaſon, to diſcern and judge of *Solomon*'s meaning in this place, we are a neceſſity of trangreſſing. Thus again, in *Mark* xiv. 22. it is written. *Jeſus took bread, and bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it to them* (the diſciples) *ſaying, take, eat; this is my body which is given for you*; when at the ſame time his body was actually viſibly preſent with them in the performance of this very action. Here we ſee, if our Lord's Diſciples were not to exerciſe their reaſon in diſcerning and judging what our Lord meant by theſe words, but where to beleive them in the literal ſenſe; then they were obliged to beleive that it was his body, when at the ſame time they ſaw it was not, which would have been a contradiction. From which it appears, that is a neceſſity for us to make uſe of our reaſon, in order to know the mind of God contain'd in his revelation.

Farther, That we ought to exerciſe our reaſon in diſcerning and judging what is the mind of God contain'd in his revelation, appears from this, *viz* becauſe reaſon is planted in us for this end, and becauſe we have no other means to diſcern the mind of God by; ſo that, without this, the written word of God is but as of ſo many words or empty ſounds which to us are of no ſignification. And if we ſhould admit the Pope, or any other man, or body of men, to be the infalliable interpreters of ſcripture, which we deny, yet ſtill the caſe is the ſame; becauſe we muſt exerciſe our reaſon to diſcern and judge what is the ſenſe and meaning of their interpretation. Or, if we ſhould

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ſuppoſe a divine aſſiſtance, by which the ſpirit of God informs us what is the mind of God contained in his revelation; then this aſſiſtance, or work of the ſpirit in us, is either an aſſiſting of our reaſon in its uſe and exerciſe, as aforeſaid, or elſe it is an immediate informing of our underſtandings, by inſpiration or otherways, of thoſe truths which are contain'd in that revelation. If the former, this is juſt the ſame with what I ſaid, *viz.* it is in the exerciſe of our reaſon that we diſcover the mind of God, as aforeſaid; only here it is ſuppoſ'd, that God by his ſpirit aſſiſts and helps our reaſon in its uſe and exerciſe, and this he may do in all thoſe caſes where truth is diſcover'd by reaſon, for ought that we know. If it be the latter, *viz.* by immediately informing our underſtandings, by inſpiration or otherways, without the uſe of reaſon, as aforeſaid, then this is not a helping us to underſtand a former revelation, but it is itſelf a new revelation to us; for tho' the truths we are inform'd of are ſuch as are contain'd in, but not underſtood by, the written word; yet they are as much a new revelation to us, as if they had not been contain'd in it. From hence I conclude, that it is in the uſe and exerciſe of our reaſon that we diſcover the mind of God contain'd in his revelation, there being no other means, that we know of, but this, for us to diſcover it by. And thus we ſee that reaſon has its uſe, even in matters of faith.

TRACT

TRACT XIII.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning PRAYER.

THIS Enquiry is four-fold; *firſt*, what *prayer* is; *ſecondly*, who is the proper *object* of prayer; *thirdly*, what are the *ends* of prayer; and *fourthly*, what prayer will be *accepted* and *anſwered*.

Firſt, What prayer is? Prayer, when directed to God, may be conſidered in a *larger*, or in a more *reſtrained* ſenſe. When conſidered in a *larger* ſenſe, it ſignifies the addreſs or application of a dependant being, to his ſupreme governour, and original benefactor. And ſo it comprehends, or contains all thoſe particular acts, which, when diſtinguiſhed one from another, we call confeſſion, petition, thankſgiving, and the like. But, when it is conſidered in a more reſtrained ſenſe, then we confine it to a petition only. And in this ſenſe, it may reſpects the petitioner, or others. If it reſpects the petitioner, then it is a petitioning to be deliver'd from ſome evil that we feel, or to eſcape ſome evil that we fear; or a petition ing for a ſupply of thoſe good things we want, or for the continuance of thoſe we already enjoy. If it reſpects others, this may be conſidered in two reſpects, *viz.* imprecation, and interceſſion. By imprecation, we mean petitioning for ſome evil to be inflicted upon them, or continued to them: and, by interceſſion, we mean a petitioning for ſome good to be conferr'd upon them, or continued to them, or for the removing

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or preventing of ſome evil, which they are under, or in danger of falling into. In the preſent enquiry, I ſhall conſider prayer in a reſtrained ſenſe as it is confined to petition, and likewiſe as it reſpects the petitioner only. And accordingly, I ſay, that prayer is the act of the mind, carried out in deſire after ſome good not enjoy'd. I ſay prayer is the act of the *mind*; in which I exclude the act of the tongue, as eſſential to prayer. And the reaſon of this is evident, becauſe we can put up our deſires to God without the uſe of vocal words to expreſs thoſe deſires by; and conſequently the uſe of the tongue is not eſſential to prayer. Indeed, when our deſires are to be expreſs'd, in order for others to join their deſires with them, as in publick prayer, then the uſe of the tongue is neceſſary to that end, but this does not make it neceſſary and eſſential to prayer, conſider'd ſimply in itſelf. Again, I ſay, prayer is the act of the mind, carried out in deſire after ſome *good*. By which I mean, that the thing prayed for is always good in itſelf, at leaſt it is ſo in the judgment of the petitioner, or elſe it is good conſidered as a means, either to continue ſome preſent or procure ſome future good or to remove ſome preſent, or avert ſome future evil. I ſay, the thing prayed for, is always good under one or other of theſe conſiderations; becauſe it is impoſſible for a man to deſire for himſelf evil, as ſuch; and therefore when men deſire death, which is an evil of all evils that mankind generally flee from, they do not deſire it as evil, but as good, that is, as a means either to obtain ſome good which they expect beyond it, or elſe to remove them from ſome great evil which they eſteem worſe than death. Again, I ſay, that prayer is the act of the mind, carried out in deſire after ſome good [*not enjoyed.*] As the thing

thing prayed for is always good under one or other of the foremention'd conſiderations, ſo it is always future or at a diſtance. And the reaſon of this is manifeſt, becauſe deſire always ſuppoſes the abſence of the thing deſired; and therefore it muſt be either future and at a diſtance, or elſe it cannot be deſired by us. Indeed, we may deſire, and conſequently pray for the continuance of what we already enjoy; but this is not praying for what we have, but for what we have not, *viz.* for the continuance of what we have, which continuance as yet we have not. Again, I ſay, prayer is the act of the mind [*carried out.*] By which I mean, that it is carried out in deſire or petition to God, that he will vouchſafe to give us the thing which we deſire to have. For as prayer is an act of deſire, ſo we muſt not only deſire to have what we want, but alſo we muſt deſire or petition God to give us that thing, or elſe it is not prayer. Deſire, in this caſe, has a two-fold act; *firſt*, we deſire the having or enjoying of a thing; and, *ſecondly*, we deſire or petition God to give us that enjoyment. Now it is the lattar of theſe only, which is prayer. If a man is ſick of ſome diſeaſe, and he deſires to have health, in this caſe, the bare deſiring to have health is not prayer; but when to our deſire of having a thing, we add a deſire, and direct that deſire, as a petition or addreſs to God, that he will vouchſafe to give us health, or the thing deſired, this is prayer. *Laſtly*, I ſay, prayer is the act of the mind carried out in [*deſire.*] In which I exclude all other acts of the mind, from being prayer; and therefore I ſay, that love, hatred, hope, fear, joy, ſorrow, anger, and the like, tho' theſe are acts of the mind, yet they are not prayer; and tho' theſe may be exerciſed in, or be the occaſion of, or be he attendants of prayer, yet they are not

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prayer itſelf. And as to thoſe other acts of the mind, which are ſo united to deſire, that it cannot be brought forth into act without them, ſuch as thought and reflection, yet even theſe are not prayer; for tho' we cannot deſire any thing without thinking upon what we deſire, and tho' we think and reflect upon a thing never ſo much, yet if that thought and reflection does not produce an actual deſire, and the putting forth of that deſire by petition to God, this is not prayer. So that whatever goes beyond, or falls ſhort of the going out of deſire to God, is not prayer. Deſire may be weaker or ſtronger, and the putting forth of that deſire, in petition to God, may be more or leſs earneſt, or fervent, or whatever term we expreſs it by, and every degree of deſire, whether greater or leſs, put forth as aforeſaid, is prayer; becauſe it is that wherein the very eſſence of prayer conſiſts, *viz.* the act of the mind going forth in deſire to God; but whatever is leſs or more than this, is not prayer. Thus, when a man would pray to God, it is not enough for him to uſe praying words, that is, words which are expreſſive of deſire, neither is it enough for him to employ his mind in thinking upon, and producing of words which are ſuitable and proper for the expreſſing of ſuch deſire; for whether we inſtantly think upon words, or whether we uſe words already prepared to our hands, either by ourſelves or others, it makes no alteration in the caſe, any otherways than as either of them is a help or a hindrance to prayer, as perhaps either of them may be a help to ſome men in ſome caſes, and a hindrance to others; neither is it enough for him to mind what the ſenſe and meaning of thoſe words are, which he uſes, becauſe all this may be done, and yet he may not pray. His thinking upon any ſubject, and ſpeaking

ing in ſuch words as are expreſſive of deſire, and his having a ſenſe of what he means by thoſe words, is not prayer, except his thoughts ſo affect him, as to draw forth his deſire in petition to God, for the obtaining of thoſe things which he thinks and reflects upon. So, on the other ſide, whatever is more than this, is not prayer. If, when a man ſo thinks and conſiders of any ſubject, as that it draws forth his deſire in prayer to God, any other act of the mind accompanies or follows, it, whether it be love or hatred, hope or fear, anger, or the like, none of ſuch acts are prayer. Thus, if a man ſhould ſo think of his ſins, as to be induced thereby to deſire God to forgive him; and if this ſhould ſo affect him, as to cauſe him to be ſorry for his faults, and angry with himſelf that he has done ſo fooliſhly; in this caſe, his ſorrow for his ſin, and his anger againſt himſelf, is not prayer, tho' they are very ſuitable companions to it. The caſe is the ſame with every other act of the mind, which may be exerciſed in prayer, or may follow upon it.

And as thoſe other acts of the mind are, in their proper places, ſuitable companions to prayer; ſo when they are exerciſed in a proper and due meaſure, they as helps to it. Thus, when a man ſo reflects upon his ſins, as to be deeply humbled with ſorrow and ſhame, and indignation againſt himſelf, this has a natural tendency to create in him a ſtrong deſire that they may be forgiven him, and to put up that deſire very earneſtly to God for the obtaining that pardon. But when thoſe other acts of the mind are exerciſed in an undue meaſure, and exceed the bounds of reaſon, then they are ſo far from being helps, that on the contrary they are hindrances to prayer. Thus, if a man ſhould be ſo tranſported with grief and anger, when he reflects upon his ſin, as

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that he ſhould wring his hands, and tear his hair, and rend his cloaths, and caſt duſt upon his head, and roll upon the ground, and the like, as ſuch a tranſport of ſorrow and anger would make him more like a brute than a man, ſo it would be a hindrance and not a help to prayer; for when mens minds are thus ruffled, and diſcompoſed, they are indiſpoſed thereby for the regular and proper exerciſe of any duty whatever. When the mind of man is in a regular and undiſturbed ſtate, that is, when it is governed by reaſon, then it is capable of putting forth any act with ſtrength and vigour, then a man is capable of praying with fervency, *viz.* with a ſtrong and earneſt deſire to obtain what he prays for; but when a man's mind is thrown into diſorder, and is diſcompoſed by any ungoverned act, then he is weakened and indiſpoſed for the ſtrong and vigorous exerciſe of this or any other duty.

If it ſhould be here objected, that we have the declaration and examples of holy men in ſcripture, who have been tranſported, as aforeſaid. I anſwer, many declarations, which we have in ſcripture, are delivered in figurative and borrow'd expreſſions, and many others are a loftineſs of ſpeech, which expreſs much more than the ſpeaker intends. And as to the practices of good men of old, they were rather a conformity to the cuſtoms and uſages of the times and places in which they lived, than the effect of a mind tranſported beyond due meaſure, that is, beyond the bounds of reaſon. *David* danced before the ark in praiſing God; but, I think, with ſubmiſſion, this dancing was not the effect of a mind diſcompoſed by a tranſport of joy, but was a conformity to the the uſage and cuſtoms of thoſe times, which expreſſed their joy by dancing. But as cuſtoms and uſages change, ſo now if a good man ſhould,

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in praiſing God, dance as *David* did, he would make himſelf ridiculous. Beſides, the good men of old, were like the good men now, that is, they were of like paſſions with other men; and therefore it is not their examples, but the nature and reaſon of the thing, which ought to determine in this caſe.

If it ſhould be farther objected, that our Saviour, when he was in an agony, pray'd yet more earneſtly. I anſwer, The true ſtate of that caſe I take to be this: Our Saviour's ſerious reflections upon that ſcene of miſeries and temptations, which he was juſt then entering upon, put him into great fear, whether he ſhould be able to ſtand the trial. This fear had a two-fold effect upon him; *firſt*, upon his body, in that it cauſed him to ſweat to that degree, that it fell from him in great drops, like as blood uſeth to drop from a wound; for tho' his ſweat is uſually called *his bloody ſweat*, yet this is without warrant from the text; the text ſaith, *that he ſweat* [*as it were*] *great drops of blood, falling down to the ground*. *Secondly*, It had an effect upon his mind; he prayed to his Father more earneſtly, with ſubmiſſion to his will, that he might eſcape that which was the ground of his fear: *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me.* And as he thus prayed with ſtrong crying and tears, to him that was able to ſave him from death; ſo St. *Paul* ſaith, *Heb.* v. 7. *That he was heard in that he feared*, that is, his Father gave him ſtrength ſufficient for his trial; for he had an angel ſent from heaven to ſtrengthen and comfort him. Now, as this great fear, which our Saviour was under, made him to ſweat to a very great degree, and as this fear, and the effect of it, is called, by the Evangeliſt, *an agony*, and as it cauſed him to make more earneſt ſupplications and prayers, with ſtrong crying

crying and tears to his Father, for an eſcape from that which was the ground of it; ſo he ſtill preſerv'd in himſelf a regular and compos'd mind; a mind which was not diſtracted, nor over-born by all that burden which lay upon it; a mind which prayed yet more earneſtly, which ſhews plainly that it was under the government of reaſon, and not in agitation or diſcompoſure. As our Saviour was under great fear, ſo that fear, or rather his ſerious reflections upon that which was the ground of it, drew from him ſtrong deſires, and theſe deſires he put up to his Father with great earneſtneſs; but ſtill maintain'd in himſelf a mind regular and undiſturbed, when thoſe terms are oppoſed to a mind ruffled and diſcompos'd by an ungovern'd tranſport, whether of fear, joy, ſorrow, or the like. And as deſire is ſtronger or weaker, and as the putting forth that deſire is more or leſs earneſt, ſo this difference ariſes, partly from the different temper and conſtitution of the petitioner, partly from the different ſubjects it is exercis'd upon, partly from the different manners of our thinking and reflecting upon thoſe ſubjects, and partly from ſome other cauſes. I ſay, partly from the different manners of our thinking and reflecting upon thoſe ſubjects; for as the ſame words have a different effect upon the minds of men, from the different manners of their being expreſs'd, ſo our own reflections have a different influence upon our own minds, from the different manner of reflecting. Thus, if a man ſhould walk along the ſtreets of a city, in a very ſlow pace, with his face to the ground, and ſhould, with a ſlow and weak voice, ſay *fire*, *fire*, and ſhould ſhew an unconcernedneſs at what he ſaid, this would make very little or no impreſſion upon the minds of thoſe that heard him. The manner of this ad-

dreſs would indiſpoſe people from being affected with it; whereas if the ſame man ſhould haſtily walk along the ſtreets of the ſame city, and ſhould, in a grave and ſerious manner, with an audible voice, cry *fire*, as aforeſaid, this would ſtrongly affect all who heard him; becauſe both the ſubject, and the manner of addreſs, have a natural tendency to produce this effect. So in like manner when we think and reflect upon any ſubject, in a ſlight, careleſs, and indifferent manner, ſuch thoughts and reflections will have little or no effect upon our minds or lives; but when we think ſeriouſly, and with concern, upon the ſame ſubject, and with an earneſt application of thought and reflection, this ſtrongly affects us, and has a tendency to make a great and laſting impreſſion upon us. Further, As prayer conſiſts in the going out of deſire to God, and as this deſire may be ſtrong, or weak, and the putting forth of this deſire may be more or leſs earneſt; ſo it certainly becomes us to reflect upon the ſubject of deſire, with ſuch ſerioufneſs and concern as is ſuitable to it, and may be productive of earneſt ſupplication and prayer, ſeeing it is ſuch as is moſt acceptable to God, and moſt effectual to anſwer the ends of prayer. Our Lord reflected ſo ſeriouſly upon the ſufferings he was to undergo, that it produced ſupplications and prayers with ſtrong crying and tears. Not but that ſtill we ought to keep our reflections within the bounds of reaſon; becauſe, when we go beyond this, they diſtract and ſo weaken the mind, like as when a man runs along the ſtreets of a city, and with a loud and hideous noiſe crys *fire*, *fire*, this ſurprizes and affrights, and ſo weakens the minds of thoſe that hear it. The manner of our reflecting is, for the raiſing or heightening of our affections, like wind

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to a ſhip. If we think ſlightly, and without concern, upon any ſubject, our affections are in ſuch a caſe like a ſhip becalm'd, unmov'd, or at leaſt mov'd very weakly. If we think ſeriouſly, our affections are mov'd proportionably, either with fear, love, deſire, or the like, even as a ſhip is moved faſter or ſlower, in proportion to the gale of wind it is under the influence of. But if our reflections are ſo violent and diſorderly, as not to be under the government of reaſon, then they diſtract and confound the mind, like a ſhip under the violence of a ſtorm, and ſo render it indiſpoſed for the regular and due exerciſe of any affection or duty whatſoever. Thus I have enquired into the firſt particular, what prayer is; *namely*, the act of the mind carried out in deſire after ſome good not enjoy'd.

Secondly, *Who* is the proper object of prayer? *Note*, In this branch of the enquiry, I ſhall likewiſe conſider prayer in a reſtrained ſenſe, as it is confined to petition only. So that, by the proper object of prayer, I mean, *who* we may apply ourſelves to for a ſupply of our wants, with a reaſonable hope of ſucceſs. And, here I ſhall conſider the object of prayer in the largeſt ſenſe; and accordingly, I ſay, that every being is the proper object of prayer, which hears our petitions, and is poſſeſs'd with ability to help us; or that can intercede with, and make an intereſt for us to him who is poſſeſs'd with ſuch ability, and who hath a right to exerciſe that ability for our good, and alſo hath a will or diſpoſition to help us, or may be wrought upon, by our prayers, to have ſuch a diſpoſition. I ſay, the proper object of prayer, muſt be one that hears our prayers. And this is moſt evident; for as the end of prayer, in this caſe, is the obtaining the good

things we pray for, and tho' he whom we pray to hath ability to help us; yet our prayers cannot be a proper means to anſwer that end, except the being we pray to hears thoſe prayers, and ſo is induced by them to anſwer them; conſequently when we pray to any being which does not hear our petitions, we can have no reaſonable ground to hope for ſucceſs. Again, I ſay, that the proper object of prayer muſt be one that is poſſeſs'd with ability to help us, or that can intercede with, and make an intereſt for us to him who is poſſeſs'd of ſuch ability. And the reaſon of this is clear, becauſe we can have no rational ground to hope that the end of our prayers will be anſwer'd, in obtaining the good things prayed for, except the Being we pray to is either inveſted with ability to help us himſelf, or elſe can intercede with, and make an intereſt for us to him who is inveſted with ſuch ability, there being no juſt ground to hope for ſucceſs, if we ſeek for help where it is not to be had. I ſay farther, that the proper object of prayer muſt not only be poſſeſs'd of ability to help us, but alſo he muſt be inveſted with a right to exerciſe that ability for our good. Thus, for, *example*, if an Almoner is entruſted with an hundred pounds to give to twenty poor men, and if he hath an expreſs order to give it to ſome particular men, and to no others; and if another poor man, who has not been nominated, ſhould petition him for ſome of this money, in this caſe, the poor man would pray to one who is not the proper object of his prayer; for tho' the Almoner is poſſeſs'd with ability to help him, yet the poor man can have no reaſonable ground to hope for ſucceſs; becauſe this *Almoner* is not to govern himſelf (in the diſtribution of this bounty) by the cries or neceſſities of the poor, but by the rule and direction given

given him by his Lord. *Laſtly*, I ſay, that the proper object of prayer muſt be one who hath a will or diſpoſition to help us, or may be wrought upon, by our prayers, to have ſuch a diſpoſition. And the reaſon of this is evident, becauſe the want of a will or diſpoſition to help us, is as great a bar to our attainment, as the want of power and ability; and conſequently, when we know ſuch a diſpoſition cannot be obtained, there can be no rational ground to hope for ſucceſs. Theſe grounds being laid down, which are undeniably evident in themſelves, from hence I raiſe the following obſervations.

Firſt, That ſtocks and ſtones, and the like, are in no caſe the proper objects of prayer, becauſe they are defective and wanting in every thing which is abſolutely neceſſary to make them ſo. I obſerve,

Secondly, That our fellow-creatures, mankind, when in proper circumſtances, are the proper objects of prayer, that is, when we can acquaint them with our deſires, and when they are poſſeſſed with ability to help us, and have a right to exerciſe that ability for our good, or can uſe their intereſt with others that are poſſeſſed with ſuch ability; and when we have reaſon to think, either that they have a diſpoſition to help us, or may be prevailed upon by our prayers to have ſuch a diſpoſition: I ſay, that men, in theſe circumſtances, are the proper objects of prayer, becauſe there is good ground to hope, that, if we are the proper objects of their kindneſs, our prayers will be accepted, and anſwered. I obſerve,

Thirdly, That the ſouls of men, departed this life, in all probability, are not the proper objects of prayer. For as we have no juſt ground to think, either that they hear our prayers, or that they have any power or ability to help us; ſo

from hence it will follow, that in all probability they are not proper objects to be pray'd to; becauſe, if we ſhould addreſs to them, we have no reaſonable ground to hope for ſucceſs. I obſerve,

Fourthly, That it is probable good angels are not the proper objects of prayer, at leaſt we have no aſſurance that they are. For tho' they are all miniſtering ſpirits, ſent forth to adminiſter to them that ſhall be heirs of ſalvation, and ſo are entruſted with ability to help thoſe they are to miniſter to; yet, notwithſtanding this, they may not be proper objects to be pray'd to; *firſt*, becauſe we do not know, nor can we have any aſſurance that they hear any of our prayers; and conſequently can have no juſt ground to hope for ſucceſs, if we pray to them. *Secondly*, Suppoſe they do hear our prayers, yet, for ought we know, they may not be at liberty to exerciſe their ability as they pleaſe; but, like the Almoner before-mentioned, they may have a particular direction how to employ it; and conſequently they may not be proper to be petition'd to for their help, becauſe, in ſuch a caſe, they are not to govern themſelves in their miniſtration by our prayers, but by the rule and direction given them by their Lord. I obſerve,

Fifthly, It is a queſtion, Whether the Son of God, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, be the proper object of prayer for *all* things? For tho' we may pray to him for his interceſſion, that is, that he would pray to and uſe his intereſt with the Father for the obtaining to us thoſe good things which we want, yet, notwithſtanding this, he may not be the proper object of prayer for *all* things. For tho' he is conſtituted by his Father, to be the Lord, and head of his people, to be the governour and judge of the world; and ſo may well be ſuppoſed to have the full knowledge of

of us in all circumſtances, and a full power to diſcharge the truſt repoſed in him, and conſequently may both hear our prayers, and have ability and a diſpoſition to help us; yet, notwithſtanding this, there may be ſome things which the Father may not have revealed to, nor put into the hand of our Saviour, but may reſerve it to his own will and pleaſure. And that this was ſo in fact, both before and after our Lord's reſurrection, is evident from his own words, if his teſtimony may be believ'd in the caſe. Thus, *Mark* xiii. 32. *Of that day and hour knoweth no one, no not the angels which are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.* Acts i. 7. *It is not for you to know the times and the ſeaſons, which the Father hath put in his* [*own*] *power.* And tho' the Father hath conſtituted his Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to be the chief miniſter of his great grace to mankind; yet, notwithſtanding this, he may reſerve to himſelf, and to his own will, the diſpoſing, or rather the directing the diſtribution of his bleſſings, and ſo may reſerve to himſelf the prerogative of being the proper object of prayer in this caſe. And tho' Chriſt may be employed in diſtributing to his people all thoſe things, which they ſhall aſk of the Father in his name; yet poſſibly he may not diſtribute them as his own bounty, and merely according to his own will; but as the bounty, and according to the will of his heavenly Father. And that this is the caſe, ſeems evident from his own words, *Luke* xi. 13. *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy ſpirit to them that aſk him?* Chap. xii. 32. *It is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.* John xvi. 23. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall aſk of the Father, in my name, he will give it you.* Matt. xxv. 34. *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom pre-*

pared for you, &c. Here we ſee, that they were bleſſed of the Father, in that he had provided an iuheritance, or kingdom for them, and that all theſe bleſſings were originally given them by the Father, and were beſtowed upon them according to his good pleaſure, tho' the Son was the miniſter of theſe bleſſings to them. But this will appear moſt evident from our Lord's anſwer to *James* and *John*, Matt. xx. 23, *Ye ſhall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptiſm that I am baptized with; but to ſit at my right-hand, and at my left* [*is not mine to give*] *but for whom it is prepared of my Father.* Here we ſee, that tho' Chriſt will be the actual diſpenſer of the benefits which the mother of *James* and *John* pray'd to him for, and ſo will actually place thoſe, whom his Father ſhall appoint, at his right-hand and at his left in his kingdom; yet he ſolemnly declared it was not his to give; and conſequently it was not he, but his Father only, which ought properly to be pray'd to for them. Beſides, there are three things obſervable, which are of great importance to the preſent queſtion. *Firſt*, Our Lord ſeems very much to diſcourage his people from putting up their addreſſes to him, *John* xvi. 23. *In that day ye ſhall aſk me nothing.* Now if our Lord hath ſo far the diſpoſing of benefits in his hand, as that he is the proper object to be ſought to for them; then it is very unlikely, that he would have diſcouraged us from putting up our petitions to him for them. And, if this was the proper way of doing him honour, he would never have diſcourag'd the practice of it, becauſe he has repreſented it as a crime in us, to withold from him any honour which is his due, *John* v. 23. *He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath ſent him.* *Secondly*, Our Lord hath directed his people to put up all their

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addreſſes to the Father; and he has likewiſe directed them what arguments to uſe with his Father, for the obtaining the benifits prayed for, *viz.* that they ſhall deſire God to give them, upon this account, and for his ſake. Now it is difficult to ſuppoſe that our Lord would direct his people to put up their addreſſes to the Father, and direct them to make uſe of his name with the Father, in order to obtain their petition, if he himſelf had thoſe very bleſſings abſolutely in his own hand, and at his own pleaſure to beſtow, antecedent to thoſe prayers. *Thirdly*, the ſacred records of the chriſtian religion declare, that Chriſt is aſcended into heaven, there to appear in the preſence of God for us; and that he continually makes interceſſion for us, and the like. Now it is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that our Lord ſhould intercede with, and make an intereſt to his Father for the obtaining thoſe very bleſſings to his people, which are already abſolutely in his own hand, and at his own diſpoſal, antecedent to that interceſſion; and conſequently, it is juſtly a queſtion, Whether our Lord, is the proper object of prayer for *all* things?

If it ſhould be here objected, *firſt*, that tho' God is the original fountain and giver of all good things, and ſo is moſt proper to be ſought to for them; yet notwithſtanding, as we may petition even our fellow-creatures, mankind, for thoſe very benifits, which they are but inſtruments in God's hand in beſtowing upon us; ſo conſequently *much more* may we petition our Saviour for thoſe benefits, which he is only an inſtrument in his Father's hand in the diſtribution of. I anſwer, When we petition God for thoſe things, which we likewiſe petition our fellow-creatures, mankind, for, the ſenſe of ſuch petitions is, or at leaſt ought to be, that we deſire God ſo to diſpoſe of things,

things, in the courſe of his providence, as that, by our honeſt endeavours, we may obtain the good things we want and pray for. Now our petitioning our fellow-creatures for the ſame things is a part of our endeavour, for as we are not to expect that God ſhould work a miracle for our help, if that help can be obtained in an ordinary way; ſo it is our duty to uſe our endeavour for its attainment, which endeavour ſometimes conſiſts in acquainting our fellow-creatures with our wants, and ſtirring up in them, by our prayers, a diſpoſition to help us; which knowledge and diſpoſition otherways they may be deſtitute of, and conſequently may not know that we are the objects of their pity, or that it is God's will that they ſhould relieve us. But, with reſpect to our Saviour, the caſe may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to be quite otherways; becauſe we have reaſon to ſuppoſe that he wants neither knowledge nor diſpoſition to communicate whatſoever his Father ſhall put into his hand to beſtow upon us. Beſides, tho' mankind has no ſuch thing as property, with reſpect to God, yet they have ſuch a thing, with reſpect to one another; and conſequently, tho' with reſpect to God, whatever they do is all duty, yet with reſpect to men, whatever they properly give is all bounty: and therefore, for theſe things, they are the proper objects of our prayers; becauſe, with reſpect to us, they give what is their own. But as to our Saviour, he chuſes to diſown any property in the benefits which his Father hath put into his hand to diſtribute, *Matt.* xx. 23. *To ſit at my right hand and at my left* [*is not mine to give*] *but for whom it is prepared of my Father.*

If it ſhould be objected, *ſecondly*, that as we acknowledge our dependence upon God by praying to him; ſo we may alſo acknowledge the divine power of our Lord, and that he is the head over

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all things for the good of his Church, by prayers and thankſgivings, tho' he will diſtribute his favours according to the appointment, and to the honour of his Father. I anſwer, As the laws of common equity, as well as the chriſtian revelation, oblige us to render to all their due, *Honour to whom honour*; *fear to whom fear*; *tribute to whom tribute is due*; ſo it is our duty to render to the Father the honour which is due to his name; and to the Son the honour which is due to him, by acknowledging what he hath done and ſuffer'd for us, and procured to us; to acknowledge, to his praiſe, that great inſtance of his love, in laying down his precious life in our cauſe, and for our ſakes; and for that he hath redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. But tho' we ought to make uſe of all proper ways and means, to honour and worſhip our bleſſed Redeemer; yet we ſhould avoid uſing ſuch as may be improper ways of doing it, ſuch as are contrary to his directions, and which may eclipſe the glory of his Father. And conſequently we ſhould not chuſe to put up our petitions to him for thoſe things, which he hath directed us to aſk of the Father in his name; becauſe as this is acting contrary to his direction, ſo it is a petitioning him for that, which, in the moſt proper ſenſe, is not his to give, and is a putting him in his Father's ſtead. Our Lord told his diſciples, that they were his friends, if they did whatſoever he commanded them; and conſequently they do Chriſt the trueſt and moſt exceptable honour, who honour him in the way which he hath directed them.

If it ſhould be objected, *thirdly*, that St. *Stephen* prayed to Chriſt, *Acts* vii. 59. *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*. Anſwer, I do not ſay that Chriſt is in no reſpect the proper object of prayer. For it may be

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proper to pray to him for his interceſſion, as I have already obſerv'd. But as to St. *Stephen*, the caſe I take to be this, He had been conferring with the unbeleiving *Jews*, concerning the perſon and miniſtry of our bleſſed Lord; and when theſe unbeleivers were not able to gainſay, nor reſiſt the wiſdom and the ſpirit by which he ſpake, this ſo ſtirred up the malice and indignation againſt him, that they gnaſhed upon him with their teeth. But it pleaſed God, at that inſtant, to give him a glorious view of the exalted ſtate of our bleſſed Redeemer at God's right hand; for the heavens opened, and he ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God. And this he declared to the people, which ſo much the more encreas'd their anger againſt him; for they ſtopped their ears, and ran upon him, and caſt him out of the city, and ſtoned him. Now while they were embrewing their hands in his precious blood, and while he was beholding the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at God's right hand, and being juſt entring into a ſtate of ſeparation of ſoul and body, he, in theſe circumſtances, firſt addreſſes himſelf to our Saviour Chriſt, by a modeſt reſignation of his ſoul into his hands, ſaying, *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*: which is as much as if he had ſaid, Lord into thy hands I reſign up my ſpirit, and do thou receive or embrace it in the arms of thy love. And when he had thus addreſs'd our Saviour, he then addreſſes himſelf to God, in the behalf of his murderers. Which addreſs, as it was diſtinct from the former, ſo there is a circumſtance peculiar to it, which the hiſtorian particularly takes notice of, *viz.* *He kneeled down*, which was a praying poſture: *He kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge; and when he had ſaid this, he fell aſleep.* Now tho' St. *Stephen* did addreſs our Saviour, as aforeſaid, yet his exam-

example does not warrant us in general to petition Chriſt for thoſe things, which he hath directed us to aſk of the Father in his name.

If it ſhould be here replied, that St. *Stephen* addreſſed himſelf to Chriſt as well in the laſt caſe as in the firſt. I anſwer, As St. *Stephen* follow'd the example of Chriſt, with reſpect to the matter of this prayer, he praying for his murderers as Chriſt did; ſo it is highly reaſonable to ſuppoſe that he followed the example and direction of Chriſt, with reſpect to the object of his prayer alſo. Our Lord every-where, in his goſpel, repreſents his Father as the proper object of prayer, with reſpect to the forgiveneſs of ſins; and he pray'd to his Father for that forgiveneſs for his crucifiers: which ſuppoſes that this forgiveneſs was not abſolutely in his own hand, and at his own pleaſure to beſtow. This makes it very reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that St *Stephen* alſo directed his requeſt to God the Father in this caſe. And hence it will follow in general, that the Father is the proper object of prayer for that forgiveneſs, whether St. *Stephen*, in his particular circumſtances, prayed to Chriſt for it or no. I obſerve,

Sixthly, That the moſt proper, chief, and unexceptionable object of prayer for *all things*, is the ſupreme God, even the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he being one in whom all the qualifications of a proper object take place in the higheſt degree. For as he is the original fountain of our being, and of all the bleſſings and mercies we either do or can enjoy, and as he perfectly hears all our prayers, and knows all our wants and deſires; ſo he hath, in himſelf, an underived ability, and an almighty never-failing power to help us, and hath an abſolute underived right, with the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition to exerciſe that ability for our good, if we are the proper

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objects of his kindneſs. And all that knowledge, that ability, that right, that diſpoſition which is in any other being, is originally derived from him; and conſequently he is the moſt proper, chief, unexceptionable object of prayer *for all things*; and when we put up our prayers to him, duly qualified, we have the moſt rational ground to hope for ſucceſs. I obſerve,

Laſtly, That when we extend our petitions farther than to our fellow-creatures, mankind, for a ſupply of our wants, it is our wiſeſt and ſafeſt way to addreſs ourſelves to the ſupreme God, the Father, himſelf, in hope of acceptance, upon the account, and for the ſake of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, whom he hath conſtituted to be our mediator and interceſſor: I ſay, it is our wiſeſt and ſafeſt way to do thus. *Firſt*, Becauſe the ſupreme God, the Father, is the moſt proper, chief, and unexceptionable object of prayer, as I have already obſerv'd. *Secondly*, Becauſe the chriſtian rule taken both from the pattern and the precepts of Chriſt, directs us to put up all our petitions to the Father. As to Chriſt's pattern, ſee *Matt.* xxvi. 39. *He prayed, ſaying, O my Father*, &c. *Verſe* 53. *Thinkeſt thou that I cannot now pray to my Father*, &c. *Luke* xxiii. 34. *Father, forgive them*, &c. *John* xii. 27, 28. *Father, ſave me from this hour,——Father, glorify thy name*, &c. *Chap.* xiv. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter.* Chap. xvii. 1. *Jeſus lift up his eyes to heaven, and ſaid, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son*; and ſo on to the end of the chapter. Here we ſee, that the chriſtian rule, taken from Chriſt's pattern, is to ſeek to the Father, and him only, as the great and original ſupplier of all our wants. As to Chriſt's precepts, ſee *Matt.* vi. 6. *But thou, when thou prayeſt, enter into thy cloſet, and when thou haſt ſhut thy door, pray*

to thy Father which is in ſecret; and thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, himſelf ſhall reward thee openly. Ver. 9. *After this manner pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven,* &c. *Luke* xi. 2. *When ye pray, ſay, Our Father,* &c. Here we ſee, that the chriſtian rule, taken from Chriſt's precepts, is to pray to the Father, and him only, as our original benefactor. Seeing then that chriſtian have a plain rule, lain down for them to direct their practice by, with reſpect to the object of prayer, I think, with ſubmiſſion, that it is the wiſeſt and ſafeſt way for us always to act agreeable to this rule. *To obey is better than ſacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams,* 1 Sam xv. 22. When *Nadab* and *Abihu* departed from the rule of their duty, *and offered ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded; fire came out from the Lord and devoured them,* Lev. x. 1, 2. I do not ſay this caſe is at all parallel. But this I ſay, that God's diſpleaſure, towards them ſtands recorded as a warning to all ſucceeding ages, for men not to chuſe to themſelves ways of ſerving God, with a neglect of the way which he hath pointed out to them. *Thirdly,* Becauſe the promiſe of being heard and anſwered is made to thoſe prayers, which are directed to the Father in Chriſt's name. Thus, *John* xvi. 23. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father in my name, he will give it you.* And *verſe* 26. Chriſt commands, ſaying, *In that day ye ſhall aſk in my name.* Seeing then that the promiſe is made to ſuch prayers as are directed to the Father in Chriſt's name, it will follow that it is our wiſeſt and ſafeſt way to pray ſo as that our petitions may come within the limits of this promiſe. *Laſtly,* Becauſe Chriſt every-where repreſents his Father as the fountain and giver of all good things, ſuch as the pardon of ſin, the benefits and comforts of the Holy Spirit, the rewards of eternal life, and even the

the ſmalleſt things that relate to this life; and that the diſpoſing of theſe depends upon the Father's good pleaſure. And all Chriſt's reaſoning, in this caſe, ſuppoſes the Father to be the object of prayer, and that he only ſhould be ſought to for theſe bleſſings. *Matt.* vi. 8. *Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye aſk him.* Verſe 14. 15. *If ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your Father forgive your treſpaſſes.* Verſe 26. *Behold the fowls of the air, your heavenly Father feedeth them.* Verſe 32. *Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of theſe things.* Chap. x. 29. *Are not two ſparrows ſold for a farthing? and one of them ſhall not fall to the ground without your Father.* Chap. xi. 25, 26. *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes: Even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.* Chap. xviii. 19. *If two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing which they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* Verſe 35. *So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto every one of you, if ye forgive not every one his brother their treſpaſſes.* Mark xi. 25, 26. *What things ſoever ye deſire, when ye pray, believe that ye ſhall receive them, and ye ſhall have them. And when ye ſtand praying, forgive, if ye have ought againſt any, that your Father alſo which is in heaven may forgive you your treſpaſſes: But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your treſpaſſes.* Luke xi. 13. *How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* Chap. xii. 32. *Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.* John vi. 32. *My Father giveth*

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you the true bread from heaven. Verſe 65. *No man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father.* Chap. xiv. 16. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter,* &c. Chap. xvi. 23. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father, in my name, he will give it you.* Here we ſee, that Chriſt repreſents his Father as the fountain and giver of all good things, and that the diſpoſing of theſe depends upon his good pleaſure, and that the Father is he which ſhould be ſought to for them; and conſequently, that it is our wiſeſt and ſafeſt way to put up all our petitions to the ſupreme God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath exalted at his right-hand to be our prevailing interceſſor. Thus I have conſidered who is the proper object of prayer, or whom we may apply ourſelves to for a ſupply of our wants, with a reaſonable hope of ſucceſs.

Thirdly, What are the ends of prayer? The ends of prayer, when directed to God, may be conſidered in two reſpects; *firſt*, God's end in appointing; and, *ſecondly*, man's end in exerciſing this duty. *Firſt*, Of God's end in appointing the duty of prayer, which I take to be wholly and ſolely the good and benefit of the petitioner. For as God is abſolutely and independently perfect in himſelf, and as he is completely happy in the enjoyment of himſelf; ſo he can have no ſelf-intereſt, no motive nor inducement, upon his own account, to move him to require or appoint any duty or performance whatever; and conſequently, God's end, in requiring this duty, is wholly and ſolely the good and benefit of his creatures, *viz.* that it may be a means to work in the petitioner a ſuitable frame and temper of mind, and to diſpoſe him to a ſuitable practice

and converſation, and ſo render him a ſuitable and proper object of God's ſpecial care and love. For as prayer is an addreſs or application of a dependant being to his ſupreme governour, and original benefactor; ſo when this duty is perform'd with ſerioufneſs and application of mind, it naturally tends to work in men an awful ſenſe of the being and attributes of God, of our dependence upon him, and of the many obligations we are under to ſerve him. It tends to awake in us a lively ſenſe of the ſovereignty and power, of the knowledge and wiſdom, of the holineſs, truth, and righteouſneſs, of the mercy, goodneſs and loving-kindneſs of the Lord. It naturally draws forth our ſouls in filial fear, in hope and truſt, in love, delight, and joy in God; and creates in us a juſt concern to pleaſe him, and to approve ourſelves in his ſight; and conſequently to put on that purity and piety, humility and charity, which is the ſpirit and practice of true chriſtianity. And as this is God's end in appointing this duty; ſo for this end he requires the frequent returns of it, that the mind of the petitioner may be habitually ſeaſoned with a ſenſe of himſelf. It is when we forget God, when God is not in all our thoughts, that we do amiſs; then our minds and lives are corrupted and defiled. But when we keep alive in ourſelves (which is done by frequent ſerious prayer) an awful and an affecting ſenſe of the great and ſupreme mind; when with *David* we ſet God always before us, when he is at our right-hand, then it is that we ſhall not be moved, *Pſalm* xvi. 8. This I take to be God's end in appointing the duty of prayer, and the frequent returns of it, *viz.* that it may create and keep alive in men's minds ſuch an awful and affecting ſenſe of himſelf, as may produce in them ſuitable affections,

ſections, a ſuitable frame and temper of mind, and draw forth from them a ſuitable practice and converſation. *Secondly*, Of men's ends in practiſing this duty. And theſe may likewiſe be conſidered in two reſpects; *firſt*, what ends they do propoſe; and, *ſecondly*, what ends they may or ought to propoſe in the exerciſe of this duty. I ſhall only conſider this matter, as it reſpects the latter, *viz.* what ends men may or ought to propoſe to themſelves in this performance: And theſe are ſeveral; as, *firſt*, that they may ſhew their reſpect, and do homage to their ſupreme governour and original benefactor. And this end is beſt ſerved in publick prayer. *Secondly*, That they may pay obedience to God's command. For as God hath required the practice of this duty, ſo certainly we may and ought to perform it with this view, and to this end, that God's law may be obſerved by us, and to ſhew our ready compliance with it. *Thirdly*, That we may approve ourſelves to God in that performance. For as God approves of, and is well pleaſed with, the ſervice and obedience of his creatures; ſo his creatures may very juſtly propoſe this as the end of their ſervices, that they may recommend themſelves to God's favour by it. *Fourthly*, That they may obtain the things prayed for. This is ſuppoſed in the very performance; for, to addreſs God for the obtaining a thing, and yet not to propoſe the obtaining that thing as the end of that addreſs, is abſurd. *Fifthly*, Men may and ought to make that the end of this performance, which was God's end in the appointing of it, *viz.* that they may be made better by it, that they may become the proper objects of God's kindneſs. For as this was God's ſole end in appointing it, ſo, I think, with ſubmiſſion, it ought to be man's chief end in the

uſe of it. When we pray, for this end, that we may become ſuitable objects of God's care and love; and when we ſo pray, as that this end is anſwered upon us, then it is moſt likely and probable that our prayers will be accepted in God's ſight. Thus I have conſidered what are the ends of prayer.

Fourthly, and *laſtly*, I am to enquire what prayers will be accepted and anſwered? By *accepted*, I mean God's approbation of them; and by *anſwered*, I mean a giving the petitioner the things prayed for. I make a diſtinction betwixt theſe, becauſe there are ſome petitions which God accepts and approves, tho' he does not grant the thing prayed for; and there are others, which God grants, or gives the petitioner the thing prayed for, and yet does not accept or approve of the petition.

Firſt, What prayer will be accepted? Here I obſerve, that the ground or reaſon of God's approving or diſapproving of any action, is the ſtate and condition of the action itſelf, and not the ſtate and condition of the perſon that performs it, antecedent to that performance. For if a good man performs a bad action, as the *nature of the action* is not changed by the ſtate of the perſon which performed it, that is, a bad action does not become good by its being performed by a good man; ſo *God's diſpoſition* (which is the holineſs and rectitude of his nature) to diſapprove bad actions, is not changed by the bad actions being done by a good man; for tho' probably the ſtate and condition of a good man may the better diſpoſe him for God's mercy, upon his repentance, when he is become guilty of a bad action, yet God diſapproves of that act equally as much, as if it had been committed by a man whoſe ſtate and condition

tion was bad, antecedent to that action. Thus *David* was a good man, a man after God's own heart; a man ſo highly favoured of God, that he ſhewed kindneſs to *David*'s poſterity for his ſervant *David*'s ſake. But when *David* did evil, in the ſight of the Lord, as in the caſe of *Uriah* the *Hittite*, all his goodneſs did not change the nature of his bad acts, nor yet change God's diſpoſition to diſapprove them. They were as bad, and God diſapproved them as much in *David*, as in any other man. So on the other ſide, if a bad man performs a good action, as the ſtate of the perſon does not change the nature of that action, ſo neither does it, nor can it, change God's diſpoſition (which is the holineſs and rectitude of his nature, as I ſaid before) to approve that action; becauſe God always approves that which is the proper object of his approbation, as all good actions are, let them be performed by good or bad men. Thus *Ahab* was a very bad man, a man that ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord; and yet when he performed a good action, as in the caſe when he humbled himſelf before the Lord, at the divine threat, all his wickedneſs did not make this good action bad, neither did it change God's diſpoſition to approve it; for as his action was good in itſelf, ſo God approved it even in wicked *Ahab*, and averted the evil threatened for its ſake, 1 *Kings* xxi. 29. Now the reaſon of all this is evident, for as God's approving or diſapproving of actions is not founded upon an arbitrary will in God, but upon the holineſs and rectitude of his nature, whence he is naturally diſpoſed to approve and diſapprove things, as they are the proper and ſuitable objects of his approbation or diſlike; ſo the ſtate and condition of men's actions, for good or evil, is not founded

upon the ſtate and condition of their perſons; but on the contrary, the ſtate of their perſons; for either of theſe, is wholly founded upon the ſtate and condition of their actions; ſo that a good action is not good, becauſe it is done by a good man, but on the contrary, a good man is a good man, becauſe he performs good actions; and a bad action is not bad, becauſe it is performed by a bad man; but on the contrary, a bad man is a bad man, becauſe he performs bad actions. Men likewiſe are good or bad to that degree, as their actions are ſo. If a good man performs a bad action, he is in that action a bad man; and if a bad man performs a good action, he is in that particular a good man; tho' men are denominated bad or good, not from a particular, but from the generality of their actions.

This being obſerved, I ſay, that when men put up ſuch petitions to God, as are good and lawful in themſelves, and when they do it ſeriouſly, and with ſuch earneſtneſs as is ſuitable to the value and importance of the things prayed for, and when they do it for the good and lawful ends before-mention'd, with a willing mind to do all that is neceſſary on their part toward the attaining the things prayed for (as, when we pray that God will give us day by day our daily bread, we have a willing mind to uſe our honeſt daily endeavour for its attainment) with a deſire to be heard upon the account, and for the ſake of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord; and with a modeſt reſignation to God's will, in all thoſe caſes wherein we are uncertain that the things prayed for are fit for God to give, or for us to receive; and more eſpecially, when we ſo pray as that God's end in appointing this duty is anſwered upon us: I ſay, when our petitions are thus qualified, as they are

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good and commendable in themſelves, ſo we need not doubt but God will accept and approve them. For tho' we may, thro' ignorance, petition for ſuch things as God may not think fit to give us, yet if thoſe petitions are qualified, as aforeſaid, God will accept them, tho' he does not anſwer them; but tho' reaſon aſſures us, that God will accept of ſuch prayers, as are thus qualified, and tho' ſuch performances (commonly called prayers) which are wholly deſtitute of theſe qualifications, God will not accept; yet how far, or what degree of defect in theſe, or either of theſe, will hinder that acceptance, is a queſtion which I will not preſume to anſwer. Thus, ſuppoſing a man ſhould put up a petition to God, duly qualified in all reſpects, ſave this, *viz.* that the earneſtneſs of the deſire did not bear a proportion to the worth and value of the benefit pray'd for; tho' we can be aſſured that this prayer would be accepted, if it had this qualification; yet we can have no aſſurance that a defect, in this particular, will *hinder* that acceptance. God perfectly knows all the temptations, weakneſſes, and diſadvantages which his creatures lie under for the performance of any duty; and as he will take all theſe into the account, ſo where he ſees men, in the main, ſincere and honeſt in their performances, his goodneſs may diſpoſe him to *overlook* many imperfections which may be in their duty, and ſo he may approve of the duty in *general*, tho' he does not approve of the *defects* of it.

Secondly, What prayers will be anſwered? And here we muſt obſerve, that God anſwers men's petitions either in *diſpleaſure*; or in *kindneſs*. In diſpleaſure, when their ſins provoke him to give them their petitions to their *hurt*;

or in kindneſs, when their conduct diſpoſes him to anſwer their petitions for their *good*. I ſhall conſider it only, with reſpect to the latter, and accordingly, I ſay, that as God appointed the duty of prayer, not for his own ſake, but for the good and benefit of the *petitioner*; and as God ſees through and to the end of all things, and conſequently muſt know what is moſt for the good and benefit of his creatures at all times; ſo when our petitions are ſo qualified, as to render them acceptable in God's ſight, and when God ſees that the giving them to us will be more for our good, than the withholding them from us, I ſay, ſuch petitions God will anſwer at the moſt proper time, and in the moſt proper meaſure, except our after-conduct ſhall render us unworthy of them.

TRACT

TRACT XIV.

AN

ENQUIRY

Concerning the Unity, or Oneneſs of the Church, or body of Chriſt.

BEFORE I enter upon this enquiry, I think it proper to obſerve, that the queſtion here is not, whether the chriſtian church has any *ſolid foundation*, that is, whether *Chriſt* was really *authorized by God*, to conſtitute ſuch a ſociety, and to give laws for the regulation and government of it; but only upon a ſuppoſition that this is the truth of the caſe, then wherein the *unity* of this *ſociety* does conſiſts: this enquiry being offered to the conſideration, not of unbelievers, but only to *chriſtians*, or thoſe who acknowledge *Chriſt's authority*, as aforeſaid.

By the term *church*, I underſtand any number of men, great or ſmall, that are callected into a *ſociety* upon a *religious account*, that is, upon the account of a particular way and method of approving and recommending themſelves to the love and favour of God, which we commonly call *religion*. By the *chriſtian* church, or the church of Chriſt, I mean all thoſe men that are collected into a body or ſociety, upon the account of their chuſing and embracing that way and method of ſerving and pleaſing God, which *Chriſt*, or the *chriſtian revelation*, hath propoſed and recommended to the world, which we call the *chriſtian religion*. As to the term *unity*, or *one*, when it is uſed ſimply, without being applied to any ſubject, then

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its ſenſe and meaning is moſt plain and eaſy to be underſtood; one being the *original* and beginning of all numbers, all numbers being no other than an addition of ſeveral unities. But when unity is applied to any ſubject, it muſt *firſt* be reduced to a *ſtandard*, before we can know what one of that ſubject is, which unity is applied to. Thus for *example*, when we ſpeak of *one pound weight*, a pound muſt be reduced to a ſtandard, juſt ſuch a degree of weight (neither more nor leſs) muſt be made the ſtandard of it, before we can know what one pound weight is. The caſe is the ſame with every other ſubject that unity is applied to. This being ſo, I ſay, that by the unity of the chriſtian church, I do not mean the oneneſs of the parts in every reſpect, but only their oneneſs in *thoſe reſpects* which Chriſt, or the chriſtian revelation, hath made the *ſtandard* of chriſtian unity. This unity may be conſider'd in two reſpects, *firſt*, *eſſential*, that is, ſuch an union as is neceſſary to the church's *being*; and all ſchiſm or ſeperation in this reſpect, is a ſeparation *from* the body; ſo that whoever departs from this eſſential unity of the body of Chriſt, ſuch an one ceaſes to be a part of that body. *Secondly*, *Integral*, that is, ſuch an unity as is neceſſary to the church's *well-being*, and all ſchiſm or ſeparation, in this reſpect, is a ſeparation, *in* the body; ſo that whoever depart from this integral unity of the body of Chriſt, that is, whoever are properly the cauſe of ſuch diviſion, ſuch perſons are guilty of a crime, *viz.* the breaking of that unity which it is their duty to maintain. And,

Firſt, Of *eſſential* unity. This may likewiſe be conſider'd in two reſpects, *viz.* unity of faith, and unity of *ſubjection*. *Firſt*, Unity of faith, that is, an unity of aſſent to the truth of the chriſtian religion,

gion, or an aſſenting to thoſe truths which Chriſt, or the chriſtian revelation, hath made the ſtandard of chriſtian faith; or, to expreſs it more fully and particularly, it is a believing or being perſuaded, that the divine perſon, which the four *Evangeliſts* have given us the hiſtory of his birth, life, death, reſurrection, and aſſenſion, that this heavenly perſon is the Meſſiah, or Chriſt, whom God hath appointed to be a Mediator between himſelf and his ſinful creatures, mankind; for the diſcovery and manifeſtation of the truth, to make known his will, and to propoſe terms of peace and reconciliation with ſinners; to aſſure them of pardon and acceptance, upon their complying with thoſe terms, and of their certain condemnation, upon their non-compliance with them to aſſure them likewiſe of their reſurrection from the dead, and a future judgment; of an everlaſting ſtate of happineſs to thoſe that comply with and an everlaſting ſtate of miſery to thoſe who reject or neglect the ſalvation offer'd. That this divine perſon, after he had proclaim'd and publiſh'd theſe good tidings of peace and ſalvation to the *Jewiſh* nation, and had confirm'd the truth of his miſſion by a multitude of uncontroulable miracles he, out of tender love to, and for the ſake of ſinners, humbly and meekly ſubmitted to the painful and ſhameful death of the croſs, as an act of obedience to his Father's will, to ſeal the truth of his doctrine, and to be a peace-offering or Sacrifice of atonement and expetiation for ſin: that God was ſo well pleas'd with his Son's performance in this matter, that he rais'd him from the dead, and exalted him at his right hand, to be the Lord and head of his people, to rule them by his laws to guide, ſupport, and comfort them by his ſpirit, to be a prevailing interceſſor with God for them; that God pardons the believing penitent for his

ſake,

ſake, and that he ſhall judge the world at the laſt and great day. This, or at leaſt as much of this, as is neceſſary to ſubject men to the kingdom and government of Chriſt, is, as I apprehend, the ſtandard, of chriſtian faith, and is one eſſential branch of chriſtian unity: this I ſay, is one eſſenſial branch of the ſtandard of chriſtian unity, becauſe this is abſolutely neceſſary to conſtitute a chriſtian, or a member of Chriſt's church; for no one can be a member of Chriſt's body, the church, 'till he is united or made one with Chriſt, and with that body, in believing that which Chriſt, of the chriſtian revelation, hath made the ſtandard of chriſtian faith. It is not neceſſary, in order to make a man a chriſtian, that he ſhould be united or made one in opinion, in every point, with every individual member of Chriſt's body; neither is it neceſſary to be one with them in any point, except what chriſt, or the chriſtian revelation, hath made the ſtandard of chriſtian faith, becauſe nothing is really neceſſary, that a man can be a chriſtian without: and as the believing the ſtandard of chriſtian faith is neceſſary to conſtitute a member of Chriſt's body; ſo whoever doth believe, or is one with Chriſt, and with his body, in that ſtandard, is a true chriſtian, a true member of Chriſt's church, if that unity of faith be accompanied with unity of ſubjection, which is the other eſſential branch of chriſtian unity.

Secondly, Unity of ſubjection, that is, a willing ſubjection to the kingdom and government of Chriſt, by making his laws the rule and meaſure both of the frame of a man's mind, and the actions of his life, a ſubmitting to the will of Chriſt, in avoiding what he forbids, doing what he commands, and patiently ſuffering (when call'd to it) for truth and righteouſneſs ſake. This, or at leaſt a purpoſe and reſolution to do ſo, with an

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actual performance in the main and principal part of a man's actions, and with an humbling ſenſe of his fault, whenever he does otherways, is the ſtandard of chriſtian ſubjection; becauſe this is abſolutely neceſſary to conſtitute a chriſtian or member of Chriſt's church. No one can be a member of Chriſt's body, who is not united to Chriſt by ſubjection; and every one who is united to him by ſubjection, as aforeſaid (which ſuppoſes an unity of faith) is a true chriſtian; becauſe he is united to Chriſt, and to the church, which is his body, in all the eſſential parts of the ſtandard of chriſtian unity. And whoever profeſſes to be a chriſtian, to be a member of Chriſt's body, the church, and is wanting in theſe, or either of theſe, he is a chriſtian only in name, and not in reality. And whoever apoſtatizes with reſpect to theſe, or either of theſe excommunicates himſelf from the body of Chriſt; that is, whoever renounces Chriſt, or whoever beleive him to be the Chriſt or true Meſſiah, and yet withdraws his ſubjection from him, and gives up himſelf to the ſervice of another lord, Chriſt is no longer his head, and he is no longer a member of Chriſt's body. And if he ſhould have been the appeared of a member, by a viſible profeſſion, and an external communion with the body of Chriſt's church; yet he is only a dead member of which ſhould be cut off, or rather he is a member only in appearance, and not in reality. So then a unity of faith, and unity of ſubjection, is all that is abſolutely neceſſary to the being of Chriſt's church in other reſpects, ſuch diviſions may diſturb its peace and comfort, but they do not deſtroy its being.

Secondly, Integral unity. This alſo may be conſider'd in two reſpects, *viz.* unity of intereſt and affections, and unity of communion chriſ-

tian worſhip. *Firſt*, Unity of intereſt and affections. As the church of Chriſt is, in the chriſtian revelation, *Rom.* xii. 5. 1 *Cor.* xii. 12, 13, 25 26, 27. conſidered as one body, whoſe members, to wit, every individual chriſtian, have one common intereſt to proſecute, *viz.* the honour and glory of Chriſt, the head, and the comfort and happineſs of the body, and of every individual member of the ſame, both as to the life that now is, and alſo that which is come; ſo it is neceſſary to the well-being of Chriſt's church, that all its members ſhould be one, in perſuing the one common intereſt of the whole. For tho' every particular member may have a particular intereſt of its own, which it may perſue in conjunction with, and in ſubordination to the one common intereſt of the whole body, without hurt or prejudice to the intereſt of that body; yet it cannot ſet up any private intereſt in oppoſition to the one common intereſt of the whole, without hurt or damage to the body of Chriſt: and conſequently whoever does ſo is guilty of criminal ſchiſm, becauſe he not only fails of filling up the relation which he ſtands in to the body, but alſo acts againſt the intereſt of, and to the hurt and damage of the body; which is highly criminal in any member: this is the worſt ſort of criminal ſchiſm in the *chriſtian church*; becauſe it does more hurt and damage to the intereſt of the body, and of chriſtianity, than any other ſort of ſchiſm whatever. This was that ſort of ſchiſm which St. *Paul* charg'd the *Corinthians* with, 1 *Cor*, i. 12. One made an intereſt for *Paul*, and another for *Apollos*, not in conjunction with, and in ſubordination to, but in oppoſition to the one common intereſt of the body of Chriſt. Nothing is more diſhonourable, nor of worſe conſequence among chriſtians, than a departing from this part of the ſtandard of chriſtian

tian unity, For when there is this ſchiſm in the body, when the members are ſet one againſt another, when their affections are alienated one from another, and the different intereſts which they perſue claſh with one another, and with the one common intereſt of the body of Chriſt, it has a fatal tendency to diſſolve the great bond of chriſtianity itſelf, *viz.* unity of faith, and unity of ſubjection; and conſequently to the diſſolution of the body of Chriſt, according to our Lord's own obſervation, *Matt.* xii. 25. *Every kingdom and houſe devided againſt itſelf falleth.* This ſhould make all chriſtians very careful not to make, or give occaſion for any ſchiſm of this ſort in the church; and eſpecially they that make the greateſt outcry againſt ſchiſm in the church, in other reſpects, ought to take care not to be guilty of this worſe ſort of ſchiſm themſelves. Whereas, on the other ſide, nothing can be more for the honour, the comfort, the happineſs, and well-being of the church, or body of Chriſt, than for all its members to be united in their intereſts and affections. When they all love one another with a brotherly affection, when every member puts on a mutual concern to promote the honour and glory of Chriſt, and the comfort and well-being of all the members of that body, when every one hath a fellow feeling of each other's comforts and afflictions, and eſteems what is done to each of them as done to himſelf, this will make our *Jeruſalem* beautiful in the ſight of the nations, and a praiſe in the earth. All other ſorts of ſchiſm in the church will be of little conſequence, if this part of the ſtandard of chriſtian unity is maintain'd; but the church's unity, in leſſer things, will be of little benefit, where this is wanting. This ſhould inſpire all chriſtians, with a noble zeal, to promote and maintain this part of the ſtandard of chriſtian unity.

ty. This was that unity in the church, which Chriſt ſo particularly recommended, and preſs'd upon all his Diſciples and followers, *John* xv. 12, 17. and that he ſo earneſtly pray'd to his Father for, *John* xvii. 11, 21, 22, 23. Chriſt and his Father were one, as they were united in perſuing the ſame deſign, *viz.* the reſtoration and ſalvation of mankind. They were one in their affections, in loving, and being beloved of each other. And he earneſtly deſired, that all, who beleiv'd in him ſhould be one, even as he and his Father were one: one in their intereſts, and one in their affections. This was that noble unity, which beautified the primitive church, *Acts* iv. 32. They were all of one heart, and one ſoul; one in their intereſts, one in their affections. Oh! that chriſtians would make all their particular intereſts to give way and ſubmit to the one common intereſt of the body of Chriſt; that they would lay aſide all their pride, paſſion, humour, and carnal intereſt, which are the ſeeds of ſchiſm in the church of Chriſt, and be of one heart, and one ſoul; that they would be one in their intereſts, one in their affections! then would the walls of our *Jeruſalem* be ſalvation, and her gates praiſe.

Secondly, Unity of communion in chriſtian worſhip. As the church is one body, which is united in faith and ſubjection to Chriſt, its one common head, and hath one common intereſt to purſue, *viz.* the honour and glory of the head, and the preſent and future happineſs of all and every member of that body; and as they have all one common Father, one common ſhare and fellowſhip in the bleſſings of the goſpel and one common hope of the heavenly inheritance; ſo it is very juſt and reaſonable, ſuitable and agreeable, beautiful and commendable, that they ſhould, if it could be, make but one congrega-

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tion, and with one mind, and one mouth glorify God, even the Father, thro' one Mediator, even Jeſus Chriſt, by the help and aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit. I ſay, if it could be, it would be very agreeable to that relation which all chriſtians ſtand in to God, to Chriſt, and to one another; to be united together, in one congregation, in the exerciſe of chriſtian worſhip, as it is a badge of their near relation to God, to Chriſt, and to each other; and as it is a neceſſary means to corroberate and ſtrengthen all the other parts of chriſtian unity. But this is what cannot be in this world, and that upon two accounts; *firſt*, diſtance of place. Our Lord commanded that his goſpel ſhould be preached to all nations; from which it will follow, that as his church is not to be confined to a particular place, but may be in ſeveral places very remote one from another at the ſame time; ſo the uniting them in one congregation, in chriſtian worſhip, will be very inconvenient to ſome, and impoſſible to others, upon the account of diſtance of place, let the place of worſhip be where it will. *Secondly*, Such a communion of worſhip, in one congregation, cannot be, upon the account of the number of its members. When the number of chriſtians is ſo great, as that at the place of worſhip all cannot be in the reach of the miniſter's voice, ſo as to hear him, and to join in the chriſtian ſervice with him, or to hear the word of exhortation from him, or when any other great inconvenience takes place, then it is neceſſary, to anſwer the ends of worſhip, that the church of Chriſt ſhould be devided in that particular, that is, ſhould be branched forth into ſeveral congregations, as the diſtance of place, and multiplicity of members, makes it neceſſary, that ſo the whole body of Chriſt's church may have the opportunity of diſcharging their duty to God,

to Chriſt and to one another, and of reaping the benefit and comfort which flows from it, without any great inconvenience to themſelves in their worldly circumſtances. Now, tho' the church is thus neceſſarily divided into diſtinct congregations, yet thoſe congregations are but one body in Chriſt; one in faith, one in ſubjection, and they ought to be one in their intereſts and affections, and to be ſo far one in chriſtian worſhip, as that, when they are abſent from the congregation which they are particularly related to, they ought to join in worſhip with the congregation they are then preſent with. And as the dividing of Chriſt's church, into ſeveral congregations, is to ariſe from neceſſity, and not from choice; ſo when the church is thus neceſſarily divided, every chriſtian ought to make a viſibe profeſſion of his relation to God, to Chriſt, and to his church, by uniting himſelf in chriſtian worſhip with that part of Chriſt's church, where the place of his abode is, and never to ſeperate from it, ſo as to make himſelf a member of another congregation without a juſt cauſe. For as the church is thus neceſſarily divided into parts, it muſt be the place of abode that muſt determine which part every member is particularly related to. And as the church, or body of Chriſt, ought to be one in communion, in chriſtian worſhip, ſo no congregation ought to make any other terms of church-communion, than what Chriſt, and the chriſtian revelation, hath made abſolutely neceſſary to conſtitute a chriſtian, *viz.* ſuch an unity of faith, and ſuch an unity of ſubjection, as Chriſt, and the chriſtian revelation hath made the ſtandard of chriſtian unity; becauſe whoever comes up to thoſe terms, as he is a member of Chriſt's body, ſo he hath a right, by virtue of that relation, to hold communion with that body: and therefore, whoever makes any other terms

terms of church-communion, than what Chriſt, and the chriſtian revelation, hath made abſolutely neceſſary to conſtitute a chriſtian, if any ſchiſm follows, upon that account, thoſe that impoſe ſuch unneceſſary terms are juſtly chargeable with that ſchiſm, and with diſturbing the church's peace. Such impoſitions have been one, and perhaps the principal cauſe of thoſe ſchiſms that have ſo long prevail'd in the *chriſtian church*, to the great diſhoner of chriſtianity: and if ever peace and unity in chriſtian worſhip be reſtored in the church, it will be when the terms of communion are reduced to their own *original ſtandard*. This unity of communion in chriſtian worſhip, I ſay, is neceſſary to the church's *well-being*, as it is a badge of chriſtians relation to God, to Chriſt, and to one another, and as it is a means of corroborating and ſtrengthening all the other parts of chriſtian unity. When chriſtians unanimouſly meet together, to humble themſelves before God, to ſeek his face, to call upon his name, and to ſet forth his praiſe; when they acknowledge their relation to Chriſt, his love to them, and their ſubjection to him; when they inform and inſtruct, uphold and ſtrengthen, quicken and enconrage, comfort and help one another, in the way to the heavenly kingdom, which are the parts of chriſtian communion: this has a natural tendency to bring down the bleſſing of God upon the church, and to build up and ſtrenghen its members, in the faith and practice of the goſpel; whereas on the other ſide, when chriſtian communion in worſhip is broken to peices, ſad experience ſhews the fatal conſequences of it. Inſtead of perſuing the one common intereſt of the church, each perſue the intereſt of their party; inſtead of loving one another with a brotherly affection, they hate and malign, and perſecute one another; inſtead of build-

ing up one another in faith and holineſs, they watch for each other's halting, and are glad of any occaſion of reproaching their brethren. This ſhould make all chriſtians very careful not to give the leaſt occaſion for *this ſort of ſchiſm* in the church, becauſe of the diſmal conſequences that attend it, and to uſe their beſt endeavours towards the healing of the church's breaches.

Thus have I ſhewn wherein the *unity* or oneneſs of the church of Chriſt conſiſts, when that unity is reduced to the *chriſtian ſtandard*, *viz.* unity of *faith*, unity of *ſubjection*, unity of *intereſt* and *affections*, and unity of *communion* in chriſtian worſhip. The two firſt are *eſſential*, as neceſſary to the church's *being*; the two latter are *integral*, as neceſſary to its *well-being*.

Objections *with their* Answers.

Object. I. Allowing that *no one* has a right to make any other terms of church-communion, than what Chriſt has made neceſſary to conſtitute a chriſtian; yet if men, in this caſe, ſhould do what they have no authority for, it will notwithſtanding be criminal ſchiſm to ſeparate, except the terms required are *ſinful*; becauſe it is every chriſtian's duty to bear with, and ſubmit to, and depart from their *right* for peace-ſake. Before I return an anſwer to this objection, I think it proper to premiſe, that as it is a general rule, or law of *equity*, to render to all perſons and things their *due*, and not to rob or leſſen one, out of reſpect or compliment to another, ſo *juſtice* ought to take place in the preſent caſe; and conſequently, as every thing ought to *yield* to peace, which is *leſs valuable* than it; ſo likewiſe peace ought to *give place* to that which is *more valuable*. Thus, in ſome inſtances, *liberty* and *truth* are more valuable than

than peace; and therefore, in all ſuch inſtances, liberty and truth are to be *maintained*, and peace ought, in reaſon, to *give place* to them. This being premiſed, I anſwer, it is the duty of a chriſtian to depart from his right in ſmaller matters, for the ſake of *peace*; and conſequently, there may be caſes in which he *ought not* to ſeparate, tho' unneceſſary terms of communion are required. But then, there may be other caſes in which he may very *juſtly* ſeparate, tho' no ſinful terms of communion are required; and conſequently, ſuch a ſeparation cannot be juſtly chargeable with criminal ſchiſm. Thus, when ſome of the members of a chriſtian ſociety live openly in a *wicked* courſe of life, and eſpecially when the *paſtors* and *overſeers* of ſuch congregations are openly vicious, and are ſo far from ſhewing any ſigns of repentance, that on the contrary they boaſt of, and glory in their wickedneſs, and will not be reclaimed, when all proper endeavours have been uſed for that purpoſe; in ſuch a caſe, ſeparation is not a departing from Chriſt and his people; but from thoſe that live in an open violation of his law, and are a reproach to the chriſtian name, and conſequently, ſuch a ſeparation cannot be juſtly chargeable with criminal ſchiſm. Again, When any congregation takes a liberty to *cut off perſons* from their communion, which, in the judgment of charity, are united to Chriſt and his people, in all the *eſſential* parts of chriſtian unity, and excludes them for no other cauſe, but their non-compliance (either in opinion or practice, or both) with ſuch things as they declare they cannot, in conſcience, comply with; in ſuch a caſe, I think, one may very juſtly *hold communion* with the *excluded* member or members, and *ſeparate* from *thoſe* who excluded them; becauſe the former are the *innocent*, and the latter the *criminal*

minal ſchiſmaticks in ſuch a diviſion. Again, When the chriſtian worſhip is ſo *corrupted*, as that it tends to raiſe in mens minds *wrong* and *unworthy* conceptions of the Deity; or when it is *clogged* and *burthened* with ſuch a load of ceremonies, as eats out the *life* and *ſpirit* of true devotion; in theſe caſes, tho' there may not be any thing in the mode of worſhip, which is directly ſinful; yet ſeeing the ends of worſhip are not anſwered, but perverted, therefore, I think, a man may juſtifiably ſeparate in ſuch a caſe, and join himſelf with a ſociety in chriſtian worſhip, where the purpoſes of it are more likely to be obtained. For as the grand deſign of *ſocial worſhip* is to raiſe and preſerve, in the minds of men, ſuch a juſt and worthy ſenſe of Almighty God, as may diſpoſe them to a ſuitable behaviour towards him, and to live in brotherly love; ſo when the mode of worſhip is ſuch, as does not anſwer, but rather *pervert* thoſe ends, then, I think, it is very *reaſonable*, and therefore juſtifiable, for a man to ſeparate from ſuch worſhip, and to pay his reſpect to God, in a way which is adapted to anſwer thoſe ends. Whether there are any other *juſtifiable* cauſes of ſeparation I ſhall not ſay; theſe, I think, are ſuch, and that criminal ſchiſm in thoſe caſes, will reſt upon the heads of thoſe who are properly the *cauſe* of ſuch diviſions. That peace and unity are very deſireable things I allow; but that they ſhould be made a ſtalking horſe to bring in, or to uphold thoſe corruptions and abominations, which have taken place in the chriſtian church, is very unreaſonable and vile.

Object. II. The *Jewiſh* church was *corrupted* both in doctrine, worſhip, and practice, and yet there was not any ſeparation that we know of, excepting the *Samaritans* which our Lord condemns. And tho' the *Jewiſh* worſhip was corrupted,

rupted, yet Chriſt joined with the *Jews*, both in their *ſynagogue* and *temple* ſervice. *Anſwer*, Whether there was a particular rule or form of worſhip of *divine* appointment, which all ſynagogues were required to worſhip God by, or whether different modes of ſynagogue-worſhip were conſidered as *ſchiſm* or diviſion in the *Jewiſh* church, are points which, I think, we cannot determine; and therefore the objection, with reſpect to ſynagogue-worſhip, is altogether needleſs. And as the temple-ſervice was of God's ſpecial appointment; ſo he gave particular direction for the performance of it, both with reſpect to the ſervice itſelf, the place where it was to be performed, the time when, the perſons to miniſter, *&c.* And as the *Samaritans* departed from *God*'s temple and altar, and ſet up a temple and altar *againſt it*; ſo herein they became *tranſgreſſors* of God's law. And whenever the *chriſtians* do as the *Samaritans* did, *viz. tranſgreſs* God's law in their ſeparation, then they will be chargeable with their crimes. But, alas, what is this to thoſe who are ſo far from tranſgreſſing any law of God by their ſeparation, that they only ſeparate from the tranſgreſſion, and the tranſgreſſors of that law, or for ſome other juſtifiable cauſe?

Object. III. The body or church of Chriſt is a ſociety conſiſting of two parts, *viz. governours* and *governed*; and the unity of this body conſiſts in the *governeds* holding communion with, and ſubjection to thoſe who are the proper governours of that ſociety; and the proper governours are only ſuch, as have received a *commiſſion*, by ſucceſſion from Chriſt, for the exerciſe of that government. And conſequently, whoever withdraws his communion, or ſubjection from them, upon any pretence whatever, is guilty of *criminal* ſchiſm. And as theſe governours giving admiſſion into this ſo-

ciety, gives thoſe who are admitted a being, as members of that body; ſo whoever they cut off from that ſociety, are really cut off from the body of Chriſt. In anſwer to this objection I obſerve, *firſt*, if in the term *church* Chriſt is *included*, then the church conſiſts of two parts, *viz.* a governour and governed, which, in the figure of a body, anſwers to the head and the members; Chriſt, and he only, being the head or governour, and all obedient believers being the members or governed in this body. But if in the term *church* Chriſt is *excluded*, then in the chriſtian church there are not two ſuch parts; in that body all and every one are members, and no one is the head or governour, properly ſo called. Chriſt has been ſo far from giving a commiſſion to any member, or members of his church, to exerciſe rule and dominion over others, that on the contrary he has put them all upon a level in point of authority, and has ſtrictly forbid, that any ſuch authority or dominion ſhould be exerciſed in his kingdom, the governing power being what he has wholly reſerved to himſelf. For the proof of this ſee *Matt.* xxiii. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Be not ye called* Rabbi; *for one is your maſter, even Chriſt, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth; for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called maſters; for one is your maſter, even Chriſt. But he that is greateſt among you, ſhall be your ſervant.* Chap. xx. 25, 27. *Jeſus called them unto him and ſaid, Ye know that the princes of the* Gentiles *do exerciſe dominion over them, and they that are great exerciſe authority upon them. But it ſhall not be ſo among you; but whoſoever will be great among you, let him be your miniſter; and whoſoever will be chief among you, let him be your ſervant.* Luke xxii. 24, 25, 26. *There was a ſtrife among them, which ſhould be accounted the greateſt. And*

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be ſaid unto them, the kings of the Gentiles *exerciſe lordſhip over them, and they that exerciſe authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye ſhall not be ſo; but he that is greateſt among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve.* Here we ſee, that our Lord bars all *authority* from being exerciſed by his Diſciples, one over another. And tho' ſuch authority did take place in the world upon a civil account, and thoſe that rightly employed it were benefactors to mankind; yet no ſuch thing ſhould take place among them, with reſpect to *religion.* This he declares it to be his will, that there ſhould be no ſuch thing as *greater* or *leſs* in his church. Old and young, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, *Barbarian, Scythian,* bond, and free are *all one,* in this reſpect, in *Chriſt Jeſus.* And if any will be greater than others, it muſt be in his greater labours, and ſervice in miniſtering to the church.

This being the ſtate of the caſe, according to Chriſt's own account of it, from hence I infer, *firſt,* that if there is any thing neceſſary to be determined for the convenience and edification of the church, which Chriſt hath not determined; ſuch as the place where, the time when chriſtian worſhip is to be exerciſed, or the like; ſuch determination does not belong to any particular member, or members, but to the whole congregation, the majority being to be eſteemed as ſuch. And ſeeing the body of Chriſt's church is of neceſſity divided into diſtinct congregations, thro' diſtance of place, and multiplicity of members, I infer, *ſecondly,* that all ſuch diſtinct congregations are *independent* one of another, in the determination of thoſe things which Chriſt hath not determined. And if they determine different from each other, their different practices, founded on ſuch different determinations, are not in the leaſt a breach of

chriſtian

chriſtian unity. I farther infer, *thirdly*, that if *Ignatius*, or *Polycarp*, or *Paul*, or an *Angel* from heaven, ſhould deliver any thing *contrary* to what Chriſt hath declared, in this reſpect, we are not to receive it, *Gal.* i. 8, 9. becauſe we are ſure no one can know the mind of Chriſt better than he knew it himſelf. As to thoſe places in the *New Teſtament*, in which chriſtians are required to *obey*, and *ſubmit* to thoſe who have the *rule* over them (or rather the care of them) the moſt which that amounts to, I think, is only this, *viz.* that chriſtian paſtors, whatſoever they from the *goſpel* ſhould diſcover to, and preſs upon the people as their duty, they are to ſubmit to and obey. Like as Chriſt preſſed obedience to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, Matt. 2, 3. *The* Scribes *and* Phariſees *ſit in* Moſes's *ſeat. All therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve and do* (that is, whatſoever they, from the law, ſhall diſcover to be your duty) *that obſerve and do; but do not ye after their works, for they ſay and do not.* Again, I infer, *fourthly*, and *laſtly*, that if any member, or members of the chriſtian church, ſhall aſſume to themſelves an authority or ruling power over their brethren, we are not obliged, by the laws of the goſpel, to ſubmit to it, any otherwiſe than as it our duty in leſs matters to depart from our right for peace-ſake.

If it ſhould be urged, that the forementiond texts where Chriſt ſaith, that *they ſhall call no one their maſter, for one was their maſter, even Chriſt*; and That with reſpect to the authority exerciſed among the Gentiles, *it ſhall not be ſo among you*; this was ſpoken to the *Apoſtles only*, and is confined to them, and has no relation to the body or church of Chriſt. *Anſwer*, There is no manner of foundation for this objection. For as we have no account whether the Apoſtles only were preſent

preſent at the times referred to; ſo ſuppoſing that to be the caſe, yet they were ſpoken to, in the capacity of *Diſciples*, and conſequently, to all that ſtand in that capacity to Chriſt, which are all his people in all ages. Moreover the perſons referred to, are conſidered as a *ſociety*, like the civil ſocieties among the *Gentiles*, which is applicable to the Apoſtles, conſidered *as* Apoſtles. Add to this, that the reaſons given for the forementioned prohibitions are both general; *one is your maſter, even Chriſt; and all ye are brethren.* This is the caſe of all chriſtians, and therefore the prohibitions are general, which theſe are made the reaſons of.

If it ſhould be father urged, that our Lord did give to his Apoſtles an *authority* over others, as appears from his words to *Peter*, Matt. xvi. 19. *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* Before I return an anſwer to what is urged, I premiſe, *firſt*, that the *doctrine* of life and ſalvation, which the Apoſtles were to publiſh to the world, is called a *treaſure*, Matt. xiii. 44. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treaſure hid in a field*, &c. Verſe 52. *Every* Scribe *that is inſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like an houſholder, which bringeth out of his treaſure things new and old.* 2 Cor. iv. 7. *We have this treaſure in earthen veſſels*, &c. Again, *ſecondly*, it was uſual for princes, and great men, to commit their keys, or keeping of their treaſure, to ſome perſon or perſons to be kept, or diſpoſed of as they ſhould direct. Thus, the *Eunuch* that *Philip* baptized was ſaid to be *a man of great authority under* Candace, *Queen of* Ethiopia, *who had the charge of all her treaſure*, Acts viii. 27. And thus the Apoſtles of Chriſt were called *ſtewards*, becauſe the doctrine of the goſpel was committed

to

to their charge, to be diſpenſed as Chriſt had directed them, 1 *Cor.* iv. 1. 1 *Tim.* i. 12. Again, *thirdly*, the laying any thing upon the *conſciences* of men, is called binding or laying burthens upon them, *Num.* xxx. 2, *If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or ſwear an oath to bind his ſoul with a bond.* Matt. xxiii. 4. *For they* (*viz.* the *Phariſees*) *bind heavy burthens and grievous to be born and lay them on men's ſhoulders.* Chap. xi. 29. 30. And as the laying any thing upon the conſciences of men, is called a *binding* that upon them, which they are obliged to thereby; ſo to take away or diſcharge men's conſciences, from what they had before been bound to, is, by the ſame rule, a *looſing* them from that to which they were before obliged. Theſe things being premiſed, I *anſwer*, our Lord did not, in the text referred to, confer any *authority*, properly ſo called, on *Peter*, and the reſt of the *Apoſtles*; but only committed to their truſt that valuable *treaſure*, *viz.* the doctrine of the goſpel, which they were faithfully to diſpenſe to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and in ſo doing they were not only to *bind* upon the conſciences of men thoſe laws and duties which he had appointed; but alſo to *looſe* them from thoſe bonds, which either the law of *Moſes*, or their ſuperſtitious teachers, had bound upon them. Aſſuring them withal, that as far as they were faithful in the diſcharge of that truſt here on earth; ſo far their actions would be approved and juſtified, by him and his Father in heaven.

If it ſhould be yet farther urged, That our Lord gave his Apoſtles power of *remitting*, and *retaining* ſins, *John* xx. 23. *Whoſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.* *Anſwer*, *Firſt*, This could not ſignify a power abſolutely to diſcharge men from that condemnation, which their ſins had expoſed,

poſed, and the law of God had bound them over to; and a power abſolutely to charge men's ſins upon them, to their final condemnation; becauſe God has promiſed pardon to the penitent obedient believer, and threatened damnation to the impenitent and therefore the interpoſition of an *Apoſtle*, cannot poſſibly make the *promiſes*, or the *threatenings* of God, of none effect. The penitent obedient believer has his pardon *ſecured* to him by God's promiſe, whether he has an apoſtolical abſolution or not; and the impenitent will be condemned, even tho' *abſolved* by an *Apoſtle*. And therefore, I anſwer, *ſecondly*, that, by remitting and retaining ſin, Chriſt only intended to aſſure them, that as they were to propoſe the *terms* of forgiveneſs of ſins to men; ſo thoſe, who *complied* with their offer, ſhould certainly be forgiven, and thoſe, who *rejected* it, ſhould be condemned. This is abundantly evident from the parallel place in *Mark* xvi. 15, 16. *Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved; and he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Again, *ſecondly*, I obſerve, that tho' the *Apoſtles* acted as Chriſt's *ambaſſadors*, going up and down the world inviting both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to believe in Chriſt, and to ſubject themſelves to his Kingdom and government; yet they did not *aſſume*, in their preaching or practice, any *authority* or *dominion*, properly ſo called, over the members of the chriſtian church, either in point of faith or practice: but on the contrary, they *diſclaimed* all ſuch authority, 2 *Cor.* i. 24. *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.* Chap. iv. 5. *We preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord; and ourſelves your ſervants for Jeſus's ſake.* And as the Apoſtles diſclaimed all authority in their *preaching*; ſo they did not aſſume any in their *practice*. Thus

Acts

Acts vi. When a difference aroſe in the church, which was occaſion'd by a partial diſtribution of the people's bounty, and occaſioned the inſtitution of the office of *deacons* (or overſeers of the poor) the Apoſtles did not aſſume any *authority*, but urged the reaſonableneſs of the thing, and the people acted accordingly. *Verſe* 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Then the twelve called the multitude of the Diſciples unto them, and ſaid, it is not meet that we ſhould leave the word of God and ſerve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look you out among you ſeven men of honeſt report, full of the Holy Ghoſt and wiſdom, whom we may appoint over this buſineſs. But we will give ourſelves continually to prayer, and to the miniſtry of the word, And the ſaying pleaſed the whole multitude; and they choſe* Stephen, *&c.* Again,

When the diſpute aroſe at *Antioch*, whether the *Gentiles* ſhould be *circumcis'd* and keep the law of *Moſes*, *Acts* xv. the Apoſtles did not, in this caſe, aſſume an *authority* of deciding the queſtion, or of determining the church's practice herein; but only by *reaſon* and *good argument*, they ſhewed, that the *Gentiles* were under no ſuch obligation, neither did the *church ſuppoſe* that the Apoſtles had any ſuch authority, for then there would have been *no place* for ſuch a diſpute. But when it was moved at *Antioch*, and they could not bring it to an iſſue, tho' *Paul* and *Barnabas* were preſent, they thought it adviſable to have the opinion of their brethren at *Jeruſalem*, to ſee whether they could offer any thing which might determine the matter. And accordingly when the caſe was heard, there was no *authority aſſumed*, but *reaſon* and *argument* was the *ground* of their determination. *Peter* ſhewed, in the inſtance of *Cornelius*, and his *gentile* friends, that God gave them the like *gifts*, and received them into equal *privileges* with the *Jews*, even whilſt in *uncircumciſion*. And he was ſeconded by

by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who ſhewed, what ſpecial miracles God had wrought among the *Gentiles* by their miniſtry. *James* added to this a prophecy in the *Old Teſtament*, Amos ix. 11. in which it was foretold, that God's name ſhould be called upon by the *Gentiles*, that is, by men in *uncircumciſion*; and that the *Gentiles*, as *Gentiles*, which came home to God under the kingdom of the Meſſiah, were owned by him as *his people*. From all which it was inferred, that the *Gentiles* were not obliged to be circumciſed, and keep the law of *Moſes*, and that it was a tempting God to lay this yoak upon them. So that the *ground* of that advice, which the brethren at *Jeruſalem* ſent to them at *Antioch*, was not any *authority* lodged in the Apoſtles, but the *reaſons* before laid down.

The like may be ſaid concerning the inſtitution of *paſtors*, or *biſhops* in the chriſtian church, that is, it was the *reaſonableneſs* and *expedience* of the thing, which was the *ground* of this, and the like inſtitutions; and not any ſpecial appointment from Chriſt, or any ſpecial authority lodged in the Apoſtles, there being no intimation of either of theſe in the *New Teſtament*. For as the electing a perſon to ſucceed *Judas*, the *traytor*, and the inſtitution of *deacons*, were neither of them by any ſpecial appointment from Chriſt, or the produce of an authority lodged in the Apoſtles, but were found upon the reaſonableneſs and fitneſs of the thing; ſo it is highly probable, that was the caſe in every other ſuch inſtitution. And as to what St. *Paul* ſaith, *Eph.* iv. 11. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and teachers*, &c. This was ſpoken, after theſe ſeveral offices and inſtitutions were in being in the church. And as this refers to the day of *Pentecoſt*, and as there were no ſuch inſtitutions on that day, therefore it muſt refer not to the *offi-*

ces,

ces, but to the *ability* which was given for the performance of them. God did not, on the day of *Pentecoſt*, make or inſtitute the ſeveral offices, before-mentioned; but he gave that ability by which theſe ſeveral offices were performed,

If it ſhould be urged, That upon theſe principles there is no *chriſtian prieſthood*, and that the paſtors, under the goſpel, are not the *ordinance of God*, but only the *creatures* of the *church*. I anſwer, If the term *prieſt* be uſed in a *qualified ſenſe*, as denoting a perſon ſet apart to *miniſter* in *holy things*, then every *chriſtian paſtor* is a prieſt; and conſequently, all thoſe who are ſet apart to the paſtoral office are the chriſtian prieſthood. But if the term *prieſt* be uſed in a *goſpel ſenſe*, *viz.* as ſignifying a perſon who has *offered himſelf* a ſpiritual ſacrifice unto God, by living to his praiſe and glory, then every *true chriſtian* is a prieſt; and the whole body of obedient believers are the chriſtian prieſthood, *Rom.* xii. 1. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5, 9. *Rev.* i. 6. *Chap.* xx. 6, And if the term *prieſt* be uſed in ſuch a *law ſenſe* as denoting a perſon ſet apart to offer up a *ſacrifice* of *atonement* or *peace-offering*, and to make reconciliation for *ſin*, then *Chriſt*, and he only, is a chriſtian prieſt; and the chriſtian prieſthood is wholly lodged in his perſon; it being Chriſt, and *he only* who offered himſelf once for all, as a ſacrifice of atonement for ſin, and is for ever ſat down at the right hand of God, to make reconciliation for ſinners, *Heb.* ii. 17. *Chap.* vii. 27, 28. *Chap.* ix. 24, 28. As to the latter part of the objection, *viz.* that paſtors, under the goſpel, are not the *ordinance of God*, but the *creatures* of the *church*, I anſwer, that if by the ordinance of God be meant, God's *ſpecial* and particular appointing of the paſtoral office, or the perſons to miniſter therein, in neither of theſe caſes are chriſtian paſtors the ordinance of God that we may know of, there

there being no intimation of any ſuch thing in the goſpel, as I obſerved above. But as eating and drinking are the *natural* or *general ordinance of God*, becauſe the nature and reaſon of things make the uſe of theſe a duty, as they are neceſſary to the ſupport and comfort of human life; ſo in like manner the *paſtoral office* is, in this general or natural ſence, the *ordinance of God*; inaſmuch as ſuch an inſtitution is neceſſary to the edification, comfort, and well-being of the chriſtian church. And as to paſtors being the creatures of the church, with reſpect to their *election*, I think they ought to be ſo, that is, every congregation ought in reaſon to *chuſe* their own paſtor; becauſe in the exerciſe of his miniſtry he is their *miniſter* and *repreſentative*; and this is conſonant to the moſt primitive pattern, *Acts* vi. 5. when the brethren elected ſeven deacons, and appointed them to be the diſtributers of their bounty. Again,

Thirdly, I obſerve, That as the houſe or kingdom of Chriſt is not an earthly, but a *ſpiritual* houſe or kingdom, *John* xviii. 36. 1 *Peter* ii. 13. ſo that, which contracts the relation betwixt the head and the members of this houſe and kingdom, is not any external profeſſion, privilege, or enjoyment; but only the *union* of each individual member, by *faith* and *ſubjection* to the *head*, *Chriſt*. For as Chriſt is the *head*; ſo he is the *center of unity* to this body; the relation of the members to each other being founded in, and depending upon each of their *relations* to the head, Chriſt. For the proof of this obſervation ſee *Matt.* vii. 21, 22, 23. *Not every one that ſaith unto me Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name? and in thy name have caſt out devils? and in thy name have done*

many wonderful works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you, &c. Chap. xii. 50. *For whoſoever ſhall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the ſame is my brother, ſiſter, and mother.* Here we ſee, the ground of a perſon's relation to Chriſt and his people, is not any external profeſſion, privilege, or enjoyment; but his union, by faith, and ſubjection to the head, Chriſt. Or in other words, by doing the will of his heavenly Father.

Here it may not be amiſs to obſerve, That as Chriſt, and his people, are often repreſented in the ſcriptures, under the figure of a *natural body*; ſo ſome men have concluded, that the natural body anſwers in *all reſpects* to the body or kingdom of Chriſt. But this is a miſtake. The kingdom of Chriſt is repreſented by many figures, *viz.* a *vineyard*, a *houſe* or *family*, a *building*, a *net* that was caſt into the ſea, the *ſowing* of *ſeed* into a field, and the like. But becauſe it is more *lively* ſet forth by a natural body, therefore it is more frequently repreſented by that figure; and not becauſe there is an exact parallel in every thing, betwixt the figure and the thing repreſented by it. Thus in the natural body, the members are united to the head, by their union to each other in that body which the head is united to; ſome more nearly, ſome more remotely, according to their ſituation in the body; and they are ſeparated, from the head, by their ſeparation from thoſe other members, which they were immediately united to. But in the body of Chriſt it is quite otherwiſe: there the members are united to one another, by their union with the head; and they are ſeparated, or their relation as fellow-members is cut off, by their being cut off from the head, Chriſt. And in this reſpect Chriſt's church is more fitly compared to a *family*, wherein the relation of fellow-ſervants depends upon their ſerving the ſame maſter.

maſter. For tho' the reſt of the ſervants ſhould diſown their relation, and ſhould *refuſe* to eat and drink with a fellow-ſervant, this would make no alteration in his relation; becauſe it does not depend upon the will and pleaſure of his fellow-ſervants, but wholly upon his own duty and obedience, *Rom.* vi. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey,* &c.

If it ſhould be urged, That our Lord ſaith, *John* iii. 5. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again of water and of the ſpirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Here we ſee, that as baptiſm is an external performance; ſo it is neceſſary to our entrance into Chriſt's church. I anſwer, Baptiſm is an hieroglyphick figure, by which is repreſented the *religious* change, which the perſon paſſes thro' who is baptized. And this change is either a change of a *man's religion*, that is, it is a quitting that way and method of ſerving and pleaſing God, that a perſon was in before, and embracing a new way for the anſwering of that purpoſe; or elſe it is a *moral change* of heart and life, which is commonly called *repentance*. The former of theſe was repreſented in the *baptiſm* of *Chriſt*. For as he was born under the diſpenſation of *Moſes*, or as St. *Paul* expreſſes it, *Gal.* iv. 4. *was made under the law*; and as he was the miniſter of that diſpenſation of grace, which we commonly call the *goſpel*; ſo when he entered upon his miniſtry he was baptized, as the hieroglyphick repreſentation of his own paſſing out of the diſpenſation of *Moſes* into that which followed it; and alſo as a repreſentation of that change, which the ſtate of things was to paſs thro' in him. And to all thoſe who had lived in a ſtate of ſin and rebellion againſt God, baptiſm was likewiſe an hieroglyphick repreſentation of their *reformation*. So that bap

tiſm did not contract a relation betwixt the perſon baptized, and Chriſt and his people; but only was a *viſible ſign* of a relation already contracted. For as faith in Chriſt, and ſubjection to him, or at leaſt a purpoſe of obedience was antecedent to baptiſm; and as that change was antecedent which baptiſm was only the hieroglyphick of; ſo conſequently, the perſon baptized was united, and thereby related to Chriſt and his people, antecedent to baptiſm, and therefore baptiſm could not contract that relation. So that it is not baptiſm conſidered *abſtractedly*, but it is what baptiſm is made the *hieroglyphick of*, which is neceſſary to our enterance into the kingdom of God. According to what Chriſt elſewhere declares, *viz. He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved; and he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Again,

I obſerve, *Fourthly*, and *laſtly*, that it is one thing to do the work of an Apoſtle, and another thing to be an Apoſtle by office, even as it is one thing to diſtribute an alms, which is the work of a deacon, and another thing to be an almoner or deacon by office. To preach Chriſt to unbelievers, to baptize thoſe who are proſelyted to Chriſt by that preaching, and to inſtruct, in the faith and practice of the goſpel, thoſe who are baptized, is the work of an Apoſtle, *Matt.* xxviii. 19, 20. and this work was done by *Philip* the *deacon*, tho' he was not an Apoſtle by office, *Acts* viii. 5, 12. And thoſe, who were Apoſtles by office, were ſo far from being offended with thoſe who did this work, tho' they were not ſo by office, that on the contrary they eſteemed them as partners in the work of the goſpel, and coſidered their ſervice as a proper ground of joy to them, *Phil.* i. 15.—18. *Some indeed preach Chriſt even of envy and ſtrife, and ſome of good-will. The one preach Chriſt of contention, not ſincerely, ſuppoſing to add affliction to my bonds; But the other of love, knowing that I am ſet for the defence*

fence of the goſpel. What then? notwithſtanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Chriſt is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea and will rejoice.

To conclude, The ſum of the forgoing obſervations is this, *viz.* that Chriſt, and *he only*, is the head or governour, properly ſo called, of the chriſtian church, and all the members of that body ſtand upon a *level* in point of *authority*, they being all fellow-ſervants of the ſame maſter, and fellow ſubjects to the ſame prince. That tho' the Apoſtles were intruſted with that valuable treaſure the goſpel, which they were faithful to diſpenſe to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, yet they had *no authority*, properly ſo called, lodged in them, over the conſciences of men, either in point of faith or practice. That they never *exerciſed* ſuch authority themſelves, nor pretended to *confer* it upon others. That the *relation* which chriſtians, *as chriſtians*, ſtand in to *Chriſt*, and to *one another*, is wholly founded in their union by faith and ſubjection to Chriſt, and not in any external profeſſion, privilege, or enjoyment. That tho' the Apoſtles were commiſſioned to preach Chriſt to unbelievers, yet that preaching was not confined to the apoſtolick office, but might be performed by others, to whom God had given ability and opportunity for ſuch a work. And conſequently, that chriſtian unity, or the unity of *Chriſt's church*, does not conſiſt in the members union with, and ſubjection to the unjuſt and groundleſs authority of their fellow-members, but only in their union, by faith and ſubjection, to the *head*, *Chriſt*.

TRACT XV.

AN

ENQUIRY

INTO

That important queſtion, Whether Chriſt is ſole King in his own kingdom? or, whether the civil magiſtrate, or the paſtors in Chriſt's church are inveſted with authority to rule Chriſt's ſubjects, by making laws to direct their behaviour and conduct in Chrſt's ſervice? which laws they (*viz.* Chriſt's ſubjects) are obliged in conſcience to pay active obedience to. In a Letter to a Gentleman.

SIR,

THE ſtate of chriſtianity at this time, in this part of the world, is very remarkable. For as chriſtians are here divided into two more general parts, *viz. Papiſts* and *Proteſtants*; ſo ſome of theſe ſeem to change hands: ſome *Proteſtants* ſeemingly avowing thoſe principles, upon which popery is founded, and ſome *Papiſts* ſeemingly aſſerting thoſe which are the foundation of proteſtantiſm. This ſeems evident from what has been objected to, and offer'd againſt the Biſhop of *Bangor*'s ſermom lately preach'd before

fore the King; and from that noble ſpeech made by the repreſentative of the *Sorbone* in *France*, when in their name, he preſented their book to the Earl of *Stairs*. What will be the event is not eaſy to foreſee.

The preſent dabate among us ſeems to be, *Whether Chriſt is ſole King in his own kingdom?* or, Whether the civil magiſtrates, or, the paſtors in Chriſt's church, are inveſted with authority to rule Chriſt's ſubjects, by making laws to direct their behaviour and conduct in Chriſt's ſervice? which laws, they (*viz.* Chriſt's ſubjects) are obliged in conſcience to pay active obedience to. Thisqueſtion ſeems to be of great importance; for if Chriſt is ſole King in his own kingdom, then chriſtians have no other laws but thoſe of Chriſt, for the directing of their behaviour and conduct in his ſervice, which they are, in duty bound, to pay active obedience to; but if the civil magiſtrates, or the paſtors in Chriſt's church, are inveſted with authority to rule Chriſt's ſubjects, by making laws to direct their behaviour in Chriſt's ſervice, then the freedom of the goſpel may be a much greater bondage than the bondage of the *Moſaick* law, if thoſe who are inveſted with ſuch authority are diſpoſed to make it ſo. And as this queſtion is of great importance, ſo *chriſtians*, even *proteſtants*, ſeem to be very much divided in their opinions concerning it. This being the caſe, Sir, I preſume you will not take it amiſs if I make one or two obſervations relating to this queſtion, and ſubmit them to your conſideration and judgment. I obſerve,

Firſt, As magiſtracy, or the exerciſe of a regular government in human ſociety, is the ordinance of God; and as the great and main end of government is the good and happineſs of the ſociety in which it is exerciſed; and as magiſtrates are the

guardians of human ſociety, by being a ſecurity to every one's property, and keeping every one in the quiet poſſeſſion of his own; and as they can have no right to invade that which the nature and end of their office obliges them to ſecure; ſo their authority, or right to command, can extend no farther, than to thoſe things wherein the advantage or diſadvantage of human ſociety is concern'd, the happineſs and well-being of that ſociety being their only and peculiar province; and conſequently, if they ſhould, at any time, take upon them to command, or forbid, that which no way concerns the intereſt of human ſociety, and ſhould add ſanctions to ſuch laws; as this would be acting out of their ſphere, and doing that which they had no right or authority to do; ſo conſequently their people would not be obliged, in conſcience, to pay active obedience to ſuch laws, any otherways than as when two natural evils preſent themſelves, ſo that one or other of them muſt of neceſſity be ſubmitted to, it is our duty to chuſe the leſs. The truth of this obſervation will more plainly appear, when I have premiſed, that as magiſtrates are the guardians of human ſociety, ſo their authority is annexed to, and founded on, and confined to that relation. King *George* had no authority over the people of *Great Britain*, 'till he became the King or Guardian of that people; and conſequently his authority in *Great Britain* is annexed to, and founded on, the relation in which he ſtands to the people of this nation. And as the authority of magiſtrates is annexed to, and founded on ſuch their relation; ſo it is wholly confined to it. King *George* hath no authority out of his dominions, over the ſubjects of another Prince. And the reaſon of this is evident, becauſe he does not ſtand in the relation of a guardian to them; and conſequently his authority is wholly confined to his relation.

tion. This being premiſed, I lay down the two following propoſitions.

First, *That the ground of our obligation to obedience, is wholly founded on the authority or right of commanding in the law-giver. And,*

Secondly, *That the province or relation of the go-governor, is the rule or meaſure of his authority, both with reſpect to perſons and things.*

First, The ground of our obligation to obedience, is wholly founded on the authority or right of commanding in the law-giver. Hath God commanded us to obey others? that obedience can be due only to ſuch perſons, and in ſuch things, as they, by virtue of their relation, are inveſted with authority to command; ſeeing God hath not commanded us (either in his written word, or from the nature and reaſon of things) to obey any particular command, or any particular perſon commanding, conſidered diſtinct from his relation. And as the authority of the magiſtrate is founded on, and confined to his relation; ſo our obligation to obedience, muſt be founded on, and confined to his authority: and conſequently where there is no authority to command, there can be no obligation to obey, either with reſpect to perſons or things. Beſides if the ground of our obligation to obedience, conſidered as obedience, be any thing beſides the authority of the law-giver (which properly ſpeaking is the authority of God, becauſe it is he that gives that authority to command, and requires obedience to it, by requiring every thing to be done which the nature and reaſon of things makes neceſſary) then we are utterly at a loſs to know whom we ought to obey, and whom not: and conſequently, for ought I know, I may be obliged, in conſcience, to obey every one that ſhall take a liberty to command me, whether he hath autho-

authority over me or not; but this is too great an abſurdity to be true.

Secondly, The province or relation of the governour, is the rule or meaſure of his authority, both with reſpect to perſons and things. For, as authority admits of degrees, both with reſpect to perſons and things, one man having a greater authority with reſpect to things, and more extenſive with reſpect to perſons, than another; as the King of *Great Britain* hath a greater and more extenſive authority than the Lord Mayor of *London*; ſo this difference is wholly founded in the different relations, in which they ſtand to thoſe they have that authority over; for otherways, every petty-conſtable would have as much authority as the King. Every petty-conſtable hath a meaſure of authority; but that authority, as it is founded on, ſo it is confined to his relation, and when his relation ceaſes, his authority ceaſes with it. And if he ſhould aſſume a power beyond his relation, either with reſpect to perſons or things, as this would be acting out of his province, and doing that which he hath no authority to do; ſo the perſons, to whom that power was directed, would not be obliged, in conſcience, to pay active obedience to it. The caſe is the ſame, with reſpect to all governours; for as their authority is annexed to, and founded in their relation, ſo it is wholly confined to it, both with reſpect to perſons and things. And as all magiſtrates are the guardians of human ſociety, ſome in a greater, and ſome in a leſs degree; ſo their authority can extend only to ſuch things wherein the good or hurt, the ſafety or danger, of that ſociety doth conſiſt; for as this is their only and peculiar province, ſo their authority is confined to it, and cannot be extended to thoſe things which are foreign to that relation.

Beſides,

Beſides, if the province or relation, in which governours are placed, is not the rule and meaſure of their authority, then we are utterly at a loſs to know in what caſes we are obliged, in conſcience, to pay active obedience to their commands, and in what not; and conſequently, for ought I know, it may be my duty to obey every command which is laid upon me by my governours, tho' they command me to practiſe the greateſt ſin, becauſe whereſoever, and in whatſoever, there is authority to command, there muſt be an obligation to obey; but this likewiſe is too abſurd to be true.

If it ſhould be here replied, that it is our duty to obey all the commands of our governours, except thoſe which contradict the commands of God, and that in ſuch caſes our obligation to obey our governours ceaſes, becauſe we are under a ſuperiour obligation, and conſequently cannot be obliged to practiſe any thing that is ſinful, tho' our governours ſhould lay ſuch commands upon us. I anſwer, the authority of the magiſtrate is the authority of God, becauſe it is originally derived from him; and conſequently there can be no authority ſuperiour to it. And therefore if, in theſe caſes, the magiſtrate hath any authority to command, we are under an obligation to obey, becauſe our obligation to obedience is founded on that authority; and conſequently muſt be as extenſive and univerſal, as that authority upon which it is founded; and ſuch commands, in this caſe, would not contradict, but ſuperſede or make void the commands of God; like as the goſpel of Chriſt did not contradict, but ſuperſede or make void the *Moſaick* law. But the magiſtrates commands do not ſuperſede or make void the commands of God; conſequently our non-obligation to obedience, in ſuch caſes, is not founded upon our obligation to

a ſuperiour authority (there being in fact no ſuch thing) but only upon the magiſtrate's laying ſuch commands upon us, as they have no authority to do. From the foregoing obſervation, I infer,

Firſt, That the principle ſo often laid down, *viz.* that it is the duty of ſubjects to pay active obedience to all the commands of their governours, except thoſe which run counter to the commands of God, is an erroneous principle; for if our obligation to obedience, be founded in the authority or right of commanding in the lawgiver; and if the rule or meaſure of the authority of governours, be the relation in which they ſtand; and if governours are the guardians of human ſociety, by ſecuring every one's property, and keeping every one in the quiet poſſeſſion of their own; and if this is their only and peculiar province; from hence it will unavoidably follow, that if governours command or forbid that wherein the advantage or diſadvantage of human ſociety is not at all concerned, as this is acting out of their province, and doing what they have no authority to do; ſo their ſubjects can be under no obligation to pay active obedience to ſuch commands, whether thoſe commands run counter to the commands of God or not. I infer,

Secondly, That if the civil magiſtrates, ſuch, ſhould take upon them to rule Chriſt's ſubjects, by making laws to direct their behaviour and conduct in Chriſt's ſervice, as this would not be only an acting out of their own province, by doing that which they have no authority to do, but alſo taking upon them to govern the ſervants of another maſter; ſo the ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom would be under no obligation (any other than that prudential one before-mentioned of chuſing the leſs evil) to pay active obedience to ſuch laws; becauſe, where there is no authority to command, there can be no obligation to obey. I obſerve,

Secondly,

mand, there can be no obligation to obedience, as I obſerved before.

If it ſhould be here objected, *firſt*, that the paſtors in Chriſt's church have an authority over the people committed to their care, and that their people are bound in conſcience to yield obedience to ſuch laws, as they, by virtue of that authority, have a right to lay upon them; according to the teſtimony of St. *Paul*, *Heb.* xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves; for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief*, &c. I anſwer, It is a piece of *juſtice* due to the Apoſtle, to interpret his words in ſuch a ſenſe, as is agreeable with, and not contradictory to the precepts of Chriſt. And therefore when he charged the believing *Hebrews*, *To obey them that had the rule over them, and to ſubmit themſelves*, he cannot, in reaſon, be ſuppoſed to intend any more than this, *viz.* that they ſhould ſubmit to, and follow the inſtructions and admonitions of their paſtors, in all thoſe things which they, from the goſpel, ſhould make appear to be their duty; that they ſhould obey, not the commands of their paſtors, but the commands of Chriſt, which theſe paſtors, according to their office, acquainted them with, and preſſed upon them. As to the term *ruler* (as it is expreſſed in our tranſlation) which in this, and other places of the *New Teſtament*, is applied to the paſtors in Chriſt's church; the * Biſhop of *Bangor* hath ſhewn, that the word, in the original, doth not ſignify a *ruler* in the moſt proper ſenſe, which implies a *law-giver*, but only a *teacher* or *guide*; as may be ſeen in his anſwer to the repreſentation of the committee of the lower houſe of convocation, *page* 60, 61.

* Dr. *Benjamin Hoadley*.

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Secondly, That as the body of chriſtians have but one common head, *viz.* Chriſt Jeſus, ſo all the members of that body, as ſuch, ſtand upon a level in point of authority; all of them being brethren in the ſame family, fellow-members of the ſame body, and fellow-ſervants to the ſame maſter. And Chriſt, the Lord and head of this houſe, hath been ſo far from taking in any of the members of this family to be ſharers with himſelf in the government of it, or from giving a right of dominion to one member over another, in his kingdom, that on the contrary, he hath ſtrictly forbid any ſuch authority to be exerciſed in his church, *Luke* xxiii. 25, 26. *The kings of the* Gentiles *exerciſe lordſhip over them, and they that exerciſe authority upon them, are called benefactors; but ye ſhall not be ſo. But he that is greateſt among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve.* Chriſtians, conſidered as men, united in human ſociety, may be inveſted with civil authority, or with authority in civil things, for the good and benefit of ſuch ſocieties; but chriſtians, conſidered as chriſtians, or as members of the body of Chriſt, can have no authority, properly ſo called, over one another, in religious things, or in things relating to chriſtianity; and conſequently, where there is no authority to command, there can be no obligation to obedience.

As to the *paſtors* in Chriſt's church, they ſtand in the relation of miniſters or ſervants, and not in the relation of maſters or governours of Chriſt's people; and conſequently there is no authority lodg'd in them, from that relation, to rule Chriſt's ſubjects, by making laws to direct their behaviour and conduct in Chriſt's ſervice; and therefore, if they ſhould, at any time, take upon them to make *laws*, as aforeſaid, Chriſt's people are not obliged, *in conſcience*, to pay active obedience to them; becauſe, where there is no authority to command,

If it ſhould be objected, *ſecondly*, that all things ought to be done decently and in order, in the aſſemblies of the ſaints; and that therefore the paſtors, in Chriſt's church, muſt be inveſted with authority to make ſuch laws as are neceſſary thereto, and the people muſt be obliged, in conſcience, to pay active obedience to them, becauſe decency and order cannot otherways be provided for; and conſequently, without ſuch an authority, the church of Chriſt would be no other than a *Babel* of confuſion. I anſwer, That all things ought to be done decently and in order, and to edification in the aſſemblies of the ſaints, I readily grant; but that this cannot otherways be provided for, than by the paſtors of Chriſt's church aſſuming to themſelves a power to *make laws*, which in reality they have no authority to do, this I deny. For as Chriſt is the ſole head and governour of his people; and as all his ſubjects, as ſuch, ſtand upon a level in point of authority, one member not having a right of dominion over another in his church; ſo, where any thing is neceſſary to be determin'd, with reſpect to order, decency, and edification, which Chriſt hath not determin'd, there every particular *church* may and ought to lay down ſuch rules to themſelves, as are neceſſary thereto, according to St. *Paul*'s direction to the church at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 40. And ſo decency and order may be ſufficiently provided for in the aſſemblies of the ſaints, without the paſtors of Chriſt's church aſſuming to themſelves a *power*, properly ſpeaking, over their brethren, which they have no right to.

Thus, Sir, I have given you my obſervations, with relation to the queſtion before-mentioned. I ſubmit them to your conſideration, and beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf, *SIR*,

Decemb. 5, 1717. *Yours*, &c.

TRACT

TRACT XVI.

PART of a

LETTER

To another Gentleman, relating to the foregoing Enquiry.

WHETHER I have truly ſtated the caſe, with reſpect to the grounds of obedience, and the meaſures of authority, Sir, I ſubmit to your judgment. And as this is a caſe, in which the happineſs and miſery of human ſociety is very nearly concern'd; ſo it ſeems to me to be beneath the wiſdom and goodneſs of that God, who hath made this earth a convenient habitation for a multitude of creatures, and hath made a plentiful proviſion for their comfort and well-being; I ſay, it ſeems to be beneath his wiſdom and goodneſs, to put the happineſs and miſery of the bulk of mankind, into the hands, and leave it at the will and pleaſure of a few of that ſpecies; which he muſt have done, if he hath given a *general commiſſion* to governours to make what laws they pleaſe, and make it the duty of their people to pay active obedience to all their commands. Beſides,

Such a *general commiſſion* would not only leave the preſent happineſs of human ſociety at the mercy of governours, but might alſo be a great hindrance to our eternal well-being. For upon ſuppoſition that governours are inveſted with authority to make what laws they pleaſe, and that their people are bound, in conſcience, to obey them, then it will follow, that the way to eternal life is

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ſo much the ſtraiter; becauſe our eternal happineſs would as much depend upon our ſincere obedience to all our governours commands, as it doth upon our ſincere obedience to all God's commands, notwithſtanding we may be under powerful temptations to tranſgreſs. For, ſuppoſe our governours ſhould command us to make a confeſſion of all our ſecret ſins to the parochial paſtor every Lord's-day? I chuſe to put this caſe, becauſe ſuch an inſtance of our obedience is not contradictory to the commands of God, he having no-where forbid us to make ſuch a confeſſion. This would make confeſſion to the paſtor as neceſſary to ſalvation, as repentance towards God. And foraſmuch as the perochial paſtors are of like paſſions with other men, and ſome of them are not only capable, but diſpoſed to make as bad uſe of ſuch knowledge, as any other men, what a ſtrong and powerful temptation muſt men be under, when they have done amiſs (if they have not a great degree of confidence in their paſtor, that he will not uſe the knowledge of their faults to their hurt: I ſay, what a ſtrong and powerful temptation muſt men be under in ſuch a caſe) to adventure the loſs of their ſouls, in another world, by concealing their faults, in order to preſerve their reputation in this, or prevent any other great evil, which the knowledge of their faults mights expoſe them to? they would be tempted to conceal all ſuch faults from their paſtor, as they had reaſon to fear he would make uſe of the knowledge of them to their peril. And tho', in this caſe, governours cannot be judges, whether their laws are obeyed or not, becauſe they cannot diſcover the ſecrets of men's hearts, and conſequently cannot puniſh the tranſgreſſors of them, yet this defect of knowledge and power, in them,

doth not leſſen our obligation to obedience. For, if they have authority to command, it muſt be our duty to obey, whether they have the knowledge of, or can puniſh our faults, or not. And tho' they cannot puniſh men in another world, for tranſgreſſing their laws in this, yet the caſe is much the ſame, with reſpect to the tranſgreſſors; becauſe if God hath required us to obey all the commands of our governours, and if he will puniſh our diſobedience (which is here ſuppoſed) then our puniſhment is as certain, as if it were in the governour's hand to inflict it, except our ſincere repentance doth prevent it. But bleſſed be God, that he hath not put ſuch a ſtumling-block in the way of our preſent or future well-being. For tho' magiſtracy is, in a general or natural ſenſe, the ordinance of God, becauſe the nature and reaſon of things make the uſe of it neceſſary to the ſupport and well-being of human ſociety (as every thing is, which the nature and reaſon of things makes neceſſary to be done) yet it is no farther the ordinance of God, than as it is a proper means to anſwer that end; becauſe the natural uſe and neceſſity of it (which alone conſtitutes it a divine ordinance) ariſes wholly from that relation, *viz.* as it is a proper means to obtain the aforeſaid end. And therefore the moſt abſolute Prince upon earth, how great and extenſive ſoever his power may be; yet his authority or right to command, as it is the ordinance of God, can extend only to ſuch things wherein the good or hurt, the ſafety or danger, of human ſociety is concern'd. This may perhaps more plainly appear, from an inſtance of like kind. Eating and drinking are the ordinance of God, in the ſame ſenſe as magiſtracy is; becauſe the nature and reaſon of things makes the uſe of theſe neceſſary to the ſupport and comfort of our natural life. Now if

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a perſon ſhould eat or drink (either for quantity or quality) that which is no way neceſſary to the ſupport or comfort of his natural life; ſuch eating and drinking would not be the ordinance of God, becauſe it would be defective and wanting in that very point in which the ordinance of God, in this caſe, doth conſiſt, *viz.* in being a proper means to attain the aforeſaid end; which is the only thing that conſtitutes it a divine ordinance, becauſe its natural uſe and neceſſity wholly ariſes from its relation as a proper means to its end. So in like manner, magiſtracy is the ordinance of God; becauſe the nature and reaſon of things makes the uſe of it neceſſary to the ſupport and well-being of human ſociety; but if magiſtrates ſhould take upon them to command, or forbid that, wherein the intereſt of the ſociety is not at all concern'd, this would not be the ordinance of God; becauſe it would be defective and wanting in that very point, in which the ordinance of God in this caſe, doth conſiſt, *viz.* in being a proper means to attain the aforeſaid end; which is the only thing that conſtitutes it a divine ordinance, becauſe its natural uſe and neceſſity wholly ariſes from its relation as a proper means to its end.

To perſue this argument farther, would exceed the bounds of a common letter, and therefore I deſiſt.

TRACT XVII.

THE

PREVIOUS QUESTION,

With regard to

RELIGION.

AS there is not any thing within the compaſs of human knowledge, which man is more concearn'd to diſcover, than what is *true religion*; ſo there is not any ſubject men have exercis'd their thoughts upon, which has been more controverted, or that has produced more direful effects amongſt mankind. The diſputes betwixt *Chriſtians*, *Mahometans*, *Jews*, and *Pagans*, and betwixt the ſeveral ſects that take place amongſt each of theſe, are generally about religion; each party thinking themſelves obliged to defend and propagate what they eſteem to be really ſuch, and to root out, and aboliſh, what they judge to be otherwiſe. And, as the queſtions on this ſubject are various, ſo there is one queſtion, namely, *what true religion ariſes from and is founded upon?* that is previous to them all; the right underſtanding and ſettling of which point is neceſſary to the clearing and ſettling of the reſt. With regard to which, I obſerve,

True religion, I think, muſt ariſe from, and be founded upon, either the *moral fitneſs of things*, or the *arbitrary will and pleaſure of God*: and this, I think, will plainly appear, when I have ſtated the notion, and ſhewn in what ſenſe I underſtand the ſeveral terms I here make uſe of, *viz.* by the term *religion*, I underſtand that which is the *ground*

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of *divine acceptance*; or, in other words, it is that which does render men acceptable and pleaſing to God. And, By *true* religion, I mean that which does *really* do ſo; in oppoſition to every thing, which men imagine or pretend will do it, when, in reality, it does not. By the *moral* fitneſs of things, I mean that fitneſs, which ariſes from, and is founded in the *nature* and the *relations of things*; taking it for granted, that there is an eſſential difference betwixt good and evil, or fitneſs and unfitneſs, ariſing from the nature and the relation of things, antecedent to, and independent of any divine or human determination concerning them: ſo that, when I ſay true religion ariſes from, and is founded upon the moral fitneſs of things, my meaning is (ſuppoſing that to be the caſe) that the duty which God requires at our hands is ſuch, as, in the nature of things, is fit and proper to be required of, and expected from creatures conſtituted, circumſtanced, and related as we are; and that the ground of his being pleaſed with, and ſhewing us favour, is, becauſe we are the ſuitable and proper objects of his approbation and affection.

The term *arbitrary* is oppoſed to *reſtraint*, and when it is apply'd to *human* actions, the reſtraint is of two kinds, namely, *political* and *moral*. Political reſtraint is that which ariſes from the law and conſtitution of every country, in which men live, or which they rule over. And men are ſaid to act or not to act arbritarily, as their actions are not, or as they are govern'd and reſtrain'd by thoſe laws. As thus, All thoſe Princes, who act according to their own will and pleaſure, and who have the ſole power of making laws for, and the diſpoſing of the perſons and properties of their ſubjects, ſuch princes are ſaid to be arbitrary; and their government is called arbitrary government, becauſe they are not under the direction nor the

reſtraint of law, in the exerciſe of it. On the other ſide, when men act, or rule, not according to their own will and pleaſure, but by, according or to a precedent law, then they are ſaid not to act or rule arbitrarily. As, when the King of *Great Britain* acts agreeably to the laws of this kingdom, then he is ſaid not to act arbitrarily, that is, not to act againſt, or above law; becauſe, in all ſuch caſes, his actions are govern'd and reſtrain'd by the laws of his country. It is not the good or bad principle the action ſprings from, nor yet the good or evil it produces, which denominates the action to be arbitrary in this reſpect, or to be the contrary; but only as the actor is under, or above the reſtraint of human laws, as aforeſaid. Moral reſtraint is that which ariſes from the moral fitneſs of things; and men are ſaid to act arbitrarily, in this reſpect, when they are under no ſuch reſtraint, that is, when they act without any regard to the fitneſs, or unfitneſs of things, as aforeſaid. And on the other ſide, they are ſaid not to act arbitrarily, in this reſpect, when they make the moral fitneſs of things the rule and meaſure of their actions.

To apply the term *arbitrary* to *God*, it can reſpect only *moral* reſtraint. For tho' human laws are rules for men to direct their behaviour by, and therefore men's actions may properly be ſaid to be arbitrary, or to be otherwiſe, as the actor is under, or above the reſtraint of ſuch laws; yet theſe are not a rule to God. And therefore, if his actions are directed by any law, it muſt be by the fitneſs of things; and conſequently he cannot properly be ſaid to act arbitrarily, or the contrary, any otherwiſe, than as he is not, or as he is influenced, and reſtrained by the moral fitneſs of things as aforeſaid. So that when I apply the term *arbitrary* to God, I oppoſe it to moral reſtraint, as above explained. Which leads me to obſerve, By

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the arbitrary will of God, I mean (ſuppoſing this to be the caſe) that he is not influenced and governed in his dealings with his creatures, by the moral fitneſs of things, but by ſovereign pleaſure; he commands and forbids, loves and hates, rewards and puniſhes arbitrarily, that is, without regarding the fitneſs, or unfitneſs of what he requires, or diſpenſes; or the ſuitableneſs, or unſuitableneſs of the objects of his approbation, or diſlike. And, when I ſay true religion is founded upon the arbitrary will of God, my meaning is (ſuppoſing that to be the caſe) that the duty which God requires from us, and which, when complied with, will render us the objects of his favour, does not ariſe from its being right and fit, in the nature of things, but merely from ſovereign pleaſure: God makes whatever he pleaſes the conditions of his favour, without any regard to right or wrong in the caſe.

Having thus explain'd the terms, I think it evidently appears that *true religion*, or that which will render men acceptable to God, muſt be either, *what God has arbitrarily made the conditions of his favour*; or elſe, *that which, in the nature of things, renders men the ſuitable and proper objects of it*; which of theſe is the caſe is the preſent queſtion. And that this queſtion, in order of nature, goes before all other queſtions on this ſubject; and that the ſettling of it is neceſſary to the ſettlement of the reſt, and conſequently, that it is of the greateſt importance to mankind, this, I think, will as evidently appear as the former, when I have fairly examined the point, and ſhewn how the caſe will ſtand, in the ſeveral particulars following, whether we conſider true religion, as founded on the moral fitneſs of things, or on arbitrary pleaſure, as aforeſaid. And,

Firſt, If true religion ariſes from, and is founded upon the moral fitneſs of things, then God, in this reſpect, anſwers the character, which the whole frame of nature gives him, that is, he acts the part of a *wiſe* and *good Being*. It is the utmoſt perfection of wiſdom and goodneſs, for a Being, who has all knowledge and all power, abſolutely and indepently in himſelf, and is at perfect liberty in the uſe and exerciſe of theſe, for ſuch an one, when he has call'd *moral agents* into being, not to take advantage of the *impotency* and *dependency* of ſuch creatures, by *impoſing* upon them, or acting *arbitrarily* with them, or by them; but, on the contrary, to make the *moral* fitneſs of things the *rule* and *meaſure* of his *actions*, with regard to what he requires from, and diſpenſes to them: This, I ſay, is wiſdom and goodneſs to perfection. And this is the very caſe, with reſpect to God, ſuppoſing true religion ariſes from, and is founded upon the moral fitneſs of things, as aforeſaid. God can, with regard to his natural liberty and ability, command from us, and deal with us, as he pleaſes; he being all poſſibility of controul; and therefore, for him not to make uſe of his knowledge and power diſagreeably, or to the diſadvantage of his creatures, but to direct theſe by the rules of wiſdom and goodneſs, in all his dealings with them; this is truly valuable, and highly worthy of that God, who is, by his own choice, the *common parent* of every creature, as he *voluntarily* call'd them into being. On the other ſide,

If true religion is founded on the arbitrary will of God, then God does not, in this reſpect, anſwer the character which nature has given him, that is, he *does not* act the part of a *wiſe* and *good being*. One who has all knowledge and power abſolutely and independently in himſelf, and conſequently

ſequently muſt moſt clearly diſcern the eſſential differences in things; and who is at perfect liberty to act from what motive he pleaſes; for ſuch a *being* to *neglect*, or *refuſe* to act agreeably to the nature, and the relations of things, and to make mere *capricious humour* (if I may ſo ſpeak) the *rule* and *meaſure* of his *actions*; for ſuch an one to command for commanding ſake, and not becauſe what he requires is fit, and proper to be commanded; for ſuch an one to love and value, hate and deſpiſe, either perſons or things, without regarding the ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs of the perſons, or the things themſelves, theſe are demonſtrations of the *want* of *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* in ſuch a being; and yet this is the caſe, with reſpect to God, ſuppoſing true religion to be founded upon his arbitrary will and pleaſure, as aforeſaid. God can, with regard to his natural liberty and power, act arbitrarily with his creatures in matters of religion, that is, with reſpect to their duty and his acceptance; and ſo he can act the part of a *weak* and *childiſh*, or of an *evil* and *vicious being*. But he cannot act thus, and preſerve his *moral* character; he cannot perform ſuch a part, and yet be a wiſe and good being; becauſe the doing ſo is abſolutely inconſiſtent with that character. Again,

Secondly, If true religion is founded on the moral fitneſs of things, then man, by *his own natural ability* (conſider'd as a man) is qualified to *diſcover it*. Man is a creature endow'd with a faculty or power we call *underſtanding*; in the exerciſe of which, he is capable of diſcerning the eſſential difference betwixt good and evil, or fitneſs and unfitneſs, as they ariſe from, and are founded on the nature and the relations of things; which good and evil is call'd *moral*, as it is the *object* of the *underſtanding*, and is diſcover'd by it only, and as it is diſtinguiſhed from that good and evil which is *natural* or

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phyſical, which is the *objects* of our *ſenſes*, and is diſcovered by them alone. Man being thus furniſh'd with the faculty of underſtanding, and true religion being founded on the moral fitneſs of things, he muſt, of courſe, be qualified to diſcover it, becauſe it falls within the proper province of the forementioned faculty. Let him but turn his thoughts upon himſelf, and conſider how he is conſtituted and circumſtanced, and how he ſtands naturally related to God, and to his fellow-creatures, and then he may, with eaſe, diſcover and certainly know, what he muſt be and do, to render himſelf acceptable to ſuch a wiſe and good being, as (upon the preſent ſuppoſition) God is allow'd to be; and what it is, in the nature of things which will make him a ſuitable and proper object of divine approbation, or diſlike. I ſay, a man, by the exerciſe of his underſtanding, may eaſily know what is true religion, becauſe it conſiſts in acting *agreeably* to his *nature*, *relations*, and *circumſtances*, as aforeſaid; which agreeableneſs his underſtanding qualifies him to diſcover. It is true there may be caſes attended with ſuch *perplexing* circumſtances, and whoſe conſequences may be ſo very *uncertain*, that it may be exceeding difficult to know what is beſt and fitteſt to be done. But then, even in theſe caſes, if a man, after due examination, does that which, upon the *whole*, appears to him to be *beſt*, that is, what is moſt for the *common* good, he will not fail of divine acceptance, whatever the conſequence of his behaviour may be. For, as he makes wiſdom and goodneſs the rule and meaſure of his actions, ſo, if God is a wiſe and good Being (as is here ſuppoſed) he will approve of ſuch a conduct. On the other ſide.

If true religion is founded on the arbitrary will of God, then man is *not*, by *his own natural abi-*

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lity, qualify'd to *diſcover* it; he has not any foot-ſteps to trace, or any rule to guide him in his enquiries after it. He is, in this caſe, in a much worſe condition, than the blind man is in, when in purſuit of the objects of ſight; for tho' the blind man cannot diſcover the object ſought for, by that ſenſe, yet, poſſibly, he may do it by another; whereas, in the preſent caſe, man has not any natural faculty, which can *diſcover* what is true religion, or *diſtinguiſh* it from the contrary. The exerciſe of his underſtanding cannot ſtand him in any ſtead. For tho' it qualifies him to diſcern, and judge of moral ſubjects; yet as religion, in this caſe, is not of moral conſideration (it ariſing only from arbitrary pleaſure) ſo it does not come within the reach of this diſcerning faculty. And therefore thoſe men ſay *right*, who ſay, that *reaſon* has not any thing to do with *religion*; ſuppoſing true religion to be founded on arbitrary pleaſure, and that by reaſon is meant either the exerciſe of the foremention'd faculty, or the object of it, *viz.* the moral fitneſs of things. To *reaſon*, in this caſe, is exceedingly abſurd, and is the ſame, as if a man ſhould attempt to diſtinguiſh *colours* by his *ear*. *Reaſon*, in the nature of the thing, cannot diſcover, or be at all a judge in thoſe things which depend only on the arbitrary will of God; ſuch things as theſe, as they are diſcoverable only by divine revelation; ſo it is that alone which muſt determine every thing concerning them. Which leads me to obſerve,

Thirdly, If true religion is founded on the moral fitneſs of things, then man is naturally qualify'd to *diſtinguiſh* betwixt *divine revelation* and *deluſion*; at leaſt, he is qualify'd to guard againſt all ſuch deluſion, as is *hurtful* to mankind. When any thing comes forth under the character of divine revelation, our underſtandings qualify us to examine

amine and judge, whether it is agreeable with, or contrary to the nature and the relations of things. And tho' its agreeableneſs, with the nature of things, is no certain proof that it is divine, but only that it *may* be ſo; yet its diſagreeableneſs therewith is a demonſtration, that it *cannot* poſſibly come from God; ſeeing (upon the preſent ſuppoſition) God makes the moral fitneſs of things the rule and meaſure of his actions, which ſuch a revelation is repugnant to. For the farther illuſtration of this point, I ſhall offer the following caſes.

Suppoſe a man ſhould come to me under the character of a heavenly meſſenger, and ſhould declare it to be the will of God, that I ſhould love my neighbour as myſelf, and do unto all men, as I would they ſhould do unto me (taking theſe general rules with their proper limitations) and that in ſo doing I ſhould recommend myſelf to divine regard? And, ſuppoſe this man was not ſent of God, but was himſelf under a deluſion? I examine his meſſage, and find that it is right and fit, in the nature of things, that I ſhould do as it requires; and that in ſo doing I render myſelf a ſuitable ſubject of divine favour: I likewiſe (from the ſuitableneſs of the meſſage) am induced to give credit to what the man declares of himſelf, *viz.* that he is a meſſenger ſent from God. Now, tho' in this latter point I am deceived, yet it is not to my hurt; and if I am prevailed upon by it, to render myſelf more agreeable and uſeful than I ſhould otherwiſe have been, the deluſion will prove a benefit to me, and to thoſe I have to do withal. Again,

Suppoſe a man ſhould come to me, and pretend himſelf a heavenly meſſenger, as aforeſaid, and ſhould declare it to be the will of God, that I ſhould afflict and grieve my fellow-creatures, without any juſt cauſe, that is, for not agreeing with

with me in ſome ſpeculative points, which do not admit of abſolute certainty on either ſide of the queſtion; and in like caſes, where, in the nature of the thing, there is not a proper foundation for reſentment; and that in ſo doing I ſhould entitle myſelf to divine favour? I examine this meſſage, and find it really diſagreeable, in the nature of things; and from hence conclude very juſtly, that this meſſage is not divine, and conſequently that the meſſenger is either deluded himſelf, or elſe that he is an impoſtor. So that I have a plain rule to direct and guide my judgment, in diſtinguiſhing betwixt divine revelation, and all dangerous and hurtful deluſions; and therefore, as I ſaid before, tho' in this caſe we are not abſolutely ſecure from all impoſition, yet we are qualify'd to guard againſt all ſuch as are prejudicial to mankind, as I have here ſhewn. Whereas, on the other ſide, If true religion is founded on arbitrary pleaſure, then man is not qualify'd to diſtinguiſh betwixt divine revelation and deluſion, and conſequently lies open to, and at the mercy of every impoſer. The *internal* characters of a revelation, whether good or bad, afford no light in this caſe. For, as God makes whatever he pleaſes the conditions of his favour, ſo the goodneſs or badneſs of a revelation, or of what is required by it, cannot poſſibly prove it to be divine, or to be the contrary. If I ſhould take upon me to prove a revelation to be divine, or to be otherwiſe, from its agreeableneſs with, or its being contrary to truth, juſtice, goodneſs, *&c.* it would be juſt the ſame, as if I attempted to prove that a man can ſee, by giving ſeveral inſtances in which it is evident that he heard; there being no more connexion betwixt juſtice, goodneſs, *&c.* and arbitrary pleaſure, ſo as to argue from one to the other, than there is betwixt colour and ſound.

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The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to any thing *external*, ſuch as miracles, which may attend a revelation; the having theſe, or the want of them, cannot poſſibly prove a revelation to be divine, or to be the contrary. The *having* them proves nothing, in the preſent caſe, becauſe miracles are evidences of the *power*, but not of the the *veracity* of the being that works them; and conſequently, they may attend a *lie*, for any thing we know, or for any juſt ground we have to think the contrary. To urge, in this caſe, that God will not uſe his power, nor ſuffer other beings, *viz.* evil ſpirits to uſe theirs, for the confirmation of a lie, in a matter of ſuch importance, this is the ſame as to ſay, that God does not act arbitrarily, but from the fitneſs of things; becauſe this argument is founded upon the *moral* unfitneſs of ſuch a conduct. Again, The *want* of miracles does not avail any thing, with regard to the divinity of a revelation, or the contrary. For as God does not make the fitneſs of things, but ſovereign pleaſure, the rule and meaſure of his actions; ſo when he gives a revelation, it muſt be wholly at his pleaſure, whether miracles ſhall attend it or not; and conſequently, we cannot fairly conclude, from the want of miracles, either for or againſt the divinity of that revelation, they do not attend. Again,

Fourthly, If true religion is founded on the moral fitneſs of things, then man is naturally qualify'd to diſcover the *true ſenſe* and *meaning* of divine revelation, at leaſt he is or may be ſecure from all *dangerous* and *hurtful errors*. Divine revelation, in this caſe, muſt accord with the nature and relations of things; and therefore, if any difficulty ſhould ariſe about the ſenſe and meaning of any branch of it, man has a ſafe and plain rule, *viz.* the fitneſs of things, to interpret

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it by; which, in the nature of the thing, is moſt *likely* to lead him into the true ſenſe of it; however, it will ſecure him from all dangerous errors, becauſe he cannot poſſibly fall into a *hurtful* error, when the moral fitneſs of things is his guide.

If it ſhould be urged, that tho' the fitneſs of things is a proper guide in this caſe, with regard to thoſe parts of divine revelation that relate to practice; yet it can give no light with regard to thoſe points, which are purely ſpeculative. I anſwer, Points of ſpeculation are of two kinds, *viz.* thoſe which are abſolutely ſo, and thoſe which are ſo only with regard to us. As to the former, they relate to the phyſical nature of things; and therefore, if God ſhall think fit to give any revelations of this kind, then it muſt be granted, that the moral fitneſs of things can give no light in ſuch caſes. But then it ought to be remembered, that God will either ſo *clearly* deliver ſuch points, as that there ſhall be *no place* for error, or elſe he will *excuſe* all errors which ariſe from them; it being moſt abſurd and ridiculous, to ſuppoſe, that ſuch a wiſe and good Being, as (upon the preſent ſuppoſition) God is allowed to be, ſhould give a revelation in a way, in which it is liable to be miſunderſtood, and then be diſpleaſed with his creatures, if they miſtake the ſenſe of it; ſeeing ſuch errors are not, in the nature of the thing, a proper foundation for reſentment.

As to the latter, *viz.* points of ſpeculation, which are ſo only with regard to us, theſe relate to facts paſt, preſent, or to come, performed by God, or ſome other agent; with reſpect to which, the ſame anſwer in general will ſerve, as in the former caſe; *namely*, that if God ſhall think fit to reveal any thing of this kind, he will either make the

the revelation ſo *plain*, as that there ſhall be no place for error, or elſe *excuſe* all errors which ſpring from it. And, If the point be ſuch as relates to divine conduct, either what God has done, or will do; and if any difficulty ariſes about the ſenſe and meaning of any ſuch branch of divine revelation, then, I ſay, the *fitneſs of things* is the *beſt rule* to *interpret* it by, and is moſt likely to lead us into the true ſenſe and meaning of it. And the reaſon of this is evident; *namely*, becauſe (upon the preſent ſuppoſition) it is the moral fitneſs of things, which is the rule and meaſure of God's actions. On the other ſide,

If true religion is founded on the arbitrary will of God, and if God gives a revelation to mankind, then man is not naturally qualify'd to diſcover the true ſenſe and meaning of it, he not having any thing to guide him in his enquiries, and therefore muſt be under the utmoſt uncertainty in that caſe. For, As God acts from ſovereign pleaſure, ſo he may deliver his mind either clearly or darkly, expreſsly or in figures; he may uſe the ſame term in the ſame or in different ſenſes, and apply it properly or improperly to the ſubject, as he pleaſes; and man has not any thing to aſſiſt or guide him in his ſearches after truth. To *reaſon*, in this caſe, is likewiſe *abſurd*; becauſe that, which ariſes from arbitrary pleaſure, is out of reaſon's province; and therefore thoſe men ſay right, who ſay that reaſon is not a judge of the ſenſe and meaning of divine revelation, and that it muſt be interpreted by the ſame ſpirit which gave it. I ſay, this is evidently the caſe, ſuppoſing God acts arbitrarily with his creatures; only this difficulty will ſtill remain, *namely*, that we have as little aſſurance of the ſenſe and meaning of any ſecond explanatory revelation, as of the firſt. To ſay in this caſe, that God

God will not ſuffer a ſincere and honeſt enquirer, who ſeeks his face, to fall into, or continue in any dangerous error; this, if it be urged with any ſtrength, is to reaſon from the moral fitneſs of things, which is here ſuppoſed to be diſcarded. And, as man is not ſecure from error, ſo his errors may be made as fatal to him as his Maker pleaſes: God may, if he pleaſes, puniſh every miſtake with eternal miſery, and if he ſhould do ſo (the contrary to which we cannot be aſſured of, upon the preſent ſuppoſition) there is no relief, For who can deliver out of his hand? Again,

Fifthly, and *laſtly*, If true religion is founded on the moral fitneſs of things, then it is one plain, ſimple, uniform thing, which admits of no alteration, with regard to time or place, any otherwiſe than as the nature, the relations, and the circumſtances of things differ or change. True religion is the ſame in all ages, in all countries, and in all worlds, (if I may ſo ſpeak) for if any of the other planets are inhabited with creatures conſtituted, circumſtanced, and related as we are, their religion muſt of courſe be the ſame as ours is; the moral fitneſs of things being the ſame in all ſpace, and thro' all duration.

Note, I would not here be underſtood to exclude all poſitive inſtitutions; for, as the circumſtances of things may render ſome inſtitutions proper and uſeful to mankind, as *contributing* to *virtue*, or *true goodneſs*; ſo, when that is the caſe, there is a moral fitneſs even in thoſe inſtitutions, not for any intrinſick goodneſs in them, but upon the account of that virtue they are ſubſervient to. On the other ſide,

If true religion is founded on the arbitrary will of God, then it depends upon his pleaſure, whether it ſhall be the ſame at all times, and to all

people, or not; he may, if he pleaſes, make different terms of acceptance, in every age, and to every nation or family; and that, which entitles to his favour to day, may draw forth his diſpleaſure to-morrow, for any thing we know, or for any ground we have to think the contrary. To ſay, in this caſe, that God will always make known his pleaſure to us, when he makes any ſuch change, with regard to religion, this is what we can have no juſt ground for. That it is right and fit, in the nature of things, for God to act thus fairly with his creatures, will be granted; but what have right and fit to do, or what influence can they have, where arbitrary pleaſure is the rule of action? Which is the preſent caſe,

Thus, I think, I have given a fair repreſentation of this matter, and have ſhewn in all the inſtances I have given above, how the caſe will ſtand, whether we conſider true religion as founded on the *moral fitneſs of things*, or on *the arbitrary will of God*. And I imagine, it will eaſily be diſcerned, of what great *importance* this *queſtion* is, and what *neceſſity* there is of *determining* it, in order to the *ſettling* and *determining* all other *queſtions* on this *ſubject*. But, poſſibly it may be urged, that I have ſtarted a difficulty, but not removed it; and therefore I crave leave to obſerve farther, that there are two ways only, in which we are capable of bringing this point to an iſſue; namely, *firſt*, by examining what it is which God makes the rule of action in other caſes, and ſo to argue by analogy, that is, to infer from his conduct in one caſe, how he will act in another; and, *ſecondly*, to examine what it is, in the nature of things, which is moſt likely to direct and determine his actions. And,

Firſt, If we examine what it is which God makes the rule of action in other caſes, we ſhall find

find that it is the moral fitneſs of things. Whoever takes a view of this planet, and of all the other works of God, which come within the reach of human knowledge, will eaſily ſee the marks of wiſdom and goodneſs that run thro' the whole, every part being directed to anſwer ſome wiſe and good end. To go about to exemplify this, by an induction of particulars, would be to offer an affront to the common ſenſe and reaſon of mankind; it being that which falls within every man's obſervation, tho' it is more abundantly evident to all thoſe who are qualify'd to examine and look into the works of nature; and therefore, if an argument, drawn from *analogy*, is at any time of weight, it muſt be ſo in the preſent caſe; and conſequently, true religion is not founded on arbitrary pleaſure, but on the moral fitneſs of things. Again,

Secondly, If we examine what it is, in the nature of things, which is moſt likely to direct and determine God's actions, we ſhall find it to be the moral fitneſs of things, as aforeſaid. That God is, and what he is with regard to his natural properties, theſe I ſhall not meddle with the proof of; but ſhall take it for granted, that God is, and that he is neceſſarily an immenſe, eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, and conſequently a ſelf-ſufficient, independent, and unchangeable Being. This being allowed, from hence it will follow, that as God is always capable of doing what is moſt worthy and valuable in itſelf, and which in the nature of things is right, good, beſt, and fitteſt to be done; ſeeing he knows wherein the goodneſs, fitneſs, and valuableneſs of every action lies; ſo it is moſt likely, that he always will act thus, becauſe right, good, *&c.* are ſo very beautiful and excellent in themſelves, and ſo highly preferable, in the nature of things, to arbitrary

pleaſure, that God cannot but be under a ſtronger diſpoſition to make theſe, rather than the other, the rule and meaſure of his actions. So that, whether we conſider the method of God's dealing in other caſes, or whether we conſult the nature of things; theſe both conclude very ſtrongly, that true religion ariſes from, and is founded upon the moral fitneſs of things, and not on the arbitrary will of God.

If it ſhould be urged, allowing that God does *generally* make the fitneſs of things the rule of his actions, yet it will not follow that he *always* does ſo; he is the great and only Potentate, whoſe dominion is underived, and therefore he may *ſometimes* act arbitrarily, to ſhew his creatures the abſolute ſovereignty he has over them. I anſwer, God may or can do thus, with regard to any phyſical neceſſity he is under to the contrary; but that he does act thus will not be allowed; for if the moral fitneſs of things is a motive proper and ſufficient to influence the divine conduct in *one* caſe, it muſt be ſo in *every* caſe; the reaſon being the ſame, and as proper to influence in *all* caſes, as in *ſome*. Beſides, this is meaſuring the ways of God, by what we ſee take place among *weak* and *vain* men; they are apt to ſhew the power and dominion they have over their fellow-creatures, by acting ſuch a part as the objection ſuppoſes: But can we have ſo mean and contemptible a thought of our Maker? can we imagine that our wiſe and good God will prefer ſuch an *affected ſhew* of *greatneſs*, to what is *truly great* and *valuable*? yea, rather let us call back the ungenerous thought, with a *God forbid!*

Note, When I ſay it will not be allow'd tnat God acts arbitrarily, my meaning is, that he will not act thus in all thoſe caſes where the moral fitneſs of things can be a rule to him; as to all

other

other caſes, he muſt act arbitrarily, if he acts at all; becauſe the fitneſs of things does not come into the queſtion. As thus, ſuppoſe it equally indifferent with regard to this ſyſtem, and all other ſyſtems in the univerſe, that the ſolar ſyſtem be placed where it now is, or in any other part of ſpace, then fitneſs, or unfitneſs, does not come into the caſe; and therefore the placing the ſolar ſyſtem in this part of ſpace, and not in any other, muſt be arbitrary; becauſe there was not any thing, in the nature of things, which could give the preference, and make it more fit, that it ſhould be placed where it is, rather than in any other part of ſpace.

TRACT XVIII.

A SUPLEMENT TO THE *Previous Queſtion, with regard to* RELIGION.

Wherein ſeveral objections made to the Previous Queſtion are examined, and in which God's moral character is more fully vindicated. In a Letter to a Friend.

SIR,

I Take it very kindly, that you would inform me of what has been urged to you, by way of *objection*, to my *previous queſtion*. For tho', I cannot but think myſelf in the right, the contrary ſuppoſition implying in it a plain contradiction; yet ſeeing *error* is what all men are *liable* to, and ſeeing my mind may poſſibly be *biaſſed* by ſome *unſeen prejudice* in its favour; therefore I cannot but think it proper, to examine, with care and freedom, what is offered againſt any opinion I embrace or maintain. In the tract referred to, I only gave a fair repreſentation of the caſe, without entering into any of thoſe queſtions the ſubject is liable to, or might be perplexed with; deſigning thereby to bring it into as narrow a compaſs as poſſible. And if this was a defect, I hope it will be ſupply'd in the following lines, in which I ſhall examine what

what the Gentleman (your friend) has been pleaſed to urge againſt it. The ſum of what is objected may (if I underſtand it aright) be reduced to the following propoſitions.

PROPOSITION I.

Tho' God does in ſome inſtances act from or according to the moral fitneſs of things, yet he does not always do ſo, that is, he ſometimes acts arbitrarily.

PROPOSITION II.

Tho' true religion, or that which is the ground of divine acceptance, does conſiſt in doing what is right and fit in the nature of things; yet it does not conſiſt in this alone, but alſo in our complying with thoſe forms of worſhip which are of divine inſtitution. So that, tho' we do the former, yet we ſhall not be accepted of God unleſs we perform the latter.

Before I proceed, I beg leave to obſerve, that, in order to judge aright of the moral fitneſs or unfitneſs of any action, every *circumſtance* and *conſequence*, which ſtand *related* to it, muſt be taken into the caſe; becauſe the fitneſs or unfitneſs of any action ariſes from the *good* or *bad* purpoſes it is *ſubſervient* to, and theſe oftentimes ariſe from the *different* circumſtances the action is perform'd under. So that the ſame action may be morally *fit* under ſome circumſtances, and *unfit* under others. And from hence it is, that in ſome caſes we, not being *apprized* of the circumſtances that attend an action, or the conſequences which follow it, judge the action fit at the *performance*, and afterwards are convinc'd of the *contrary*. Again, I obſerve, that, at the concluſion of my *previous queſtion*, I made the following remark: "*Note*, "When I ſay it will not be allow'd that God acts "arbitrarily, my meaning is, that he will not

"act thus in all thoſe caſes, in which the moral "fitneſs of things *can* be a *rule* to him. As to "all other caſes, he muſt act arbitrarily, if he "acts at all; becauſe the fitneſs of things does "not come into the queſtion." Theſe things being premiſed, I proceed to conſider,

PROPOSITION. I.

Tho' God does in ſome inſtances act from, or according to the moral fitneſs of things, yet he does not always do ſo, that is, he ſometimes acts arbitrarily.

With regard to this propoſition, I ſhall *firſt*, examine the propoſition itſelf: and *ſecondly*, what the Gentleman has offer'd for the proof of it. And *Firſt*, With regard to the propoſition itſelf, I obſerve, that, whereas it ſaith God ſometimes acts arbitrarily, the meaning of this muſt be, as it is urged by way of objection to what I have laid down, that he acts thus in ſome inſtances in which the moral fitneſs of things *can* be a *rule* to him; and, conſequently, if he made the moral fitneſs of things a rule to him in thoſe inſtances, he would act *otherwiſe*. I ſay, this muſt be the meaning of the propoſition, as it is urged by way of objection againſt me; becauſe to urge, that God acts arbitrarily in ſuch inſtances in which the moral fitneſs of things *cannot* be a *rule* to him, is to urge that againſt which I have not *oppoſed* any thing, and conſequently, is wholly *foreign* to the preſent queſtion. So that the obvious meaning of the propoſition is this, *namely*, that tho' God does in *ſome* inſtances act *from*, or *according* to the *moral fitneſs* of things, yet he ſometimes acts *contrary* to it; which in other words is the ſame as to ſay, that *in ſome inſtances God's actions are morally evil*. The ſenſe of the propoſition being ſettled, *viz.* that God ſometimes make the moral

moral fitneſs of things the rule and meaſure of his actions, and ſometimes acts contrary to it, I now proceed to ſhew that it is erroneous. And,

Firſt, Tho' it could be made appear that God *does*, in *fact*, ſometimes do what is *right* and *fit* in the nature of things that ſometimes he acts *otherwiſe*; yet it would not follow, that the fitneſs of things was a *rule* to him, that is, that it was the *ground* or *reaſon* of his acting in *any caſe*; becauſe he might act from capricious humour; as well in thoſe inſtances in which he act *right*, as in thoſe in which he acts *wrong*. Like the unjuſt judge in the goſpel, who, tho' he neither *feared God* nor *regarded man*, yet he would do the widow *juſtice* that required it, leſt, by her continual coming, ſhe ſhould weary him. He would do a *right* action, tho' it were from a *wrong* motive or principle. Again,

Secondly, If God makes the moral fitneſs of things a rule to him in *ſome* inſtances (which is allow'd in the propoſition) then he will do it in *every* inſtance, in which that fitneſs *can* be a *rule* to him. And the reaſon of this is evident, *namely*, that as the moral fitneſs of things is in its *own nature* truly excellent and valuable, and highly *preferable* to capricious humour and arbitrary pleaſure; and, as God knows full well wherein the fitneſs and valuableneſs of every action lies; and, as he cannot poſſibly be under any *temptation* to act *wrong*; ſo this will always be a *reaſon*, ariſing from the *nature* of things, for God to prefer a *rational* conduct before *arbitrary pleaſure*, and to direct his *actions* according. It is true, that man, tho' he is qualified to diſcern and judge betwixt *good* and *evil*, yet, notwithſtanding this, he ſometimes acts *right*, and ſometimes *wrong*. And the reaſon of this is likewiſe evident, *namely*, that as man is a compounded creature,

ture, conſiſting partly of *underſtanding*, partly of *appetite*, of *affection*, &c. and as each part of his compoſition affords a diſtinct kind of *motive* or *excitement* to action; ſo he ſometimes acts from one motive, and ſometimes from another. And this gives occaſion for his *mixed character*, *viz.* that he ſometimes acts right, and ſometimes otherwiſe; he ſometimes *follows reaſons*, and ſometimes acts *againſt it*. But this cannot be the caſe with reſpect to God, who, as he knows the moral difference in things, ſo he has no *ſelf-intereſt* nor *vitiated* affection to miſlead him (which is generally the caſe with reſpect to men) and therefore, he will, not only in *ſome* inſtances, but in *every* caſe do what is right and fit in the nature of things. Having thus ſhewn that the propoſition is erroneous, I now proceed,

Secondly, To examine what the Gentleman has offer'd to ſupport it. In my *previous queſtion* I brought two arguments to prove, that God always makes the moral fitneſs of things, and not arbitrary pleaſure, the rule and meaſure of his actions. And I do not underſtand, that the Gentleman attempted to ſhew the *weakneſs* and *inconcluſiveneſs* of thoſe arguments; but only, in oppoſition to them, he urged an argument drawn from *fact*, by producing two inſtances, *viz.* the *prohibiting* Adam *and* Eve *to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil*, and the *prohibiting the uſe of ſwines-fleſh to the* Iſraelites; which inſtances he urged as a *proof*, that God *ſometimes* acts arbitrarily. And here I obſerve, that it is ſuppoſed, as theſe inſtances are urged againſt me, that it was really *wrong*, in the *nature of things*, for God to make thoſe prohibitions. And indeed I grant it would be ſo, ſuppoſing the things prohibited were *proper* and *uſeful*, and that *no ill conſequence* attended the enjoyment of them; becauſe

here

here is a reaſon for, but no reaſon againſt that enjoyment. But this does not appear to be the caſe; and therefore the contrary ought rather to be preſumed. As to the firſt inſtance, tho' the prohibited fruit might be *proper food* for the *ſerpent*, yet it might be *otherwiſe* to *man*. For, tho' it was agreeable to the ſenſes, and gave a briſkneſs to the ſpirits; yet the taking plentifully of that fruit might tend to the *hurt* and *diſſolution* of the human compoſition. And, ſuppoſing this to be the caſe, then here is a reaſon for the prohibition; and conſequently this is not an inſtance of arbitrary pleaſure. Here is a reaſon for the prohibition, *namely*, becauſe this fruit was prejudicial and hurtful to mankind: *In the day thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt* (or thou wilt) *ſurely die* (or contribute to thy death.) As to the ſecond inſtance, *namely*, *the prohibiting the uſe of ſwines-fleſh to the* Jews; this I think likewiſe falls ſhort of proof, as in the former caſe. For, tho' ſwines-fleſh might be *proper food in one climate*, yet it might be very *hurtful* in *another*; and this might poſſibly be the caſe, with reſpect to the land of *Canaan*. The taking plentifully of that food might introduce the *leproſy*, or ſome other diſorder very *afflictive* or *diſagreeable* to mankind. And, if this was the caſe, then here is a reaſon ariſing from the nature of things for the prohibition; and conſequently this is not an inſtance of arbitrary pleaſure.

If it ſhould be urged, that theſe are mere ſuppoſitions, which have no foundation in the hiſtory. I anſwer, Allowing them to be ſuch; yet, if God governs himſelf by the moral fitneſs of things in his dealings with his creatures (which I think I have proved that he does) then *theſe*, or ſomething *like* theſe muſt be the caſe. If any ſhould yet inſiſt, that theſe are inſtances of arbi-

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trary pleaſure. I anſwer, This is begging the queſtion; and, if theſe prohibitions are allow'd to be *divine*, then there is a *moral* certainty of the contrary. Beſides, whoever thus inſiſts, I think it will lie upon him to prove (upon the foot of God's acting arbitrarily) that the foremention'd *prohibitions* are *divine*; which I think cannot be done, as I have ſhewn in my *previous queſtion* (obſervation III.) and which I now come more particularly to conſider. And, Tho' all religions which are founded on revelation ſtand upon a foot in this caſe; yet, ſeeing the ſuppoſed inſtances of arbitrary pleaſure, which are urged againſt me, are taken from the *Jewiſh revelation*, therefore I ſhall make the *divinity* of that revelation the ſubject of my preſent enquiry. And, leſt my opponents ſhould fall under any *difficulty* with regard to the *hiſtorian*, the *tranſmitting* the *hiſtory* or the *facts* recorded in it, I ſhall, in favour of them, give them leave to take for granted that *Moſes* was the writer of all the books which are commonly aſcribed to him; that thoſe books have been truly tranſmitted to us without corruption; and that the facts (*viz.* the turning a rod into a ſerpent, water into blood, and the like) were real as they are recorded. And farther, that thoſe facts were *ſupernatural*, that is, they were above the *natural* ability or *inherent* power of man to perform; and conſequently, that they were performed by the agency or co-operation of an *inviſible* being. This being the ſtate of the caſe, the queſtion will be, Whether this *revelation* and the *law*, of which *Moſes* is allow'd to be the promulgator, is divine; ſeeing the ſupernatural operations, abovemention'd, were wrought to prove it to be ſuch? And, The true anſwer to this queſtion will be, that this is perfectly *uncertain* upon the *preſent ſuppoſition*; becauſe God *may* act arbitrarily

arbitrarily in this inſtance, as well as in any other caſe, for any thing we *know*, or can *ſhew* to the *contrary*. That is, notwithſtanding thoſe ſupernatural operations were wrought to prove what *Moſes* declared to be true; yet, *Moſes* might be but an *impoſtor*; becauſe God might, in this caſe, as an inſtance of his arbitrary pleaſure, either uſe his *own power*, or permit ſome other inviſible agent to exert *ſuch power*, for the *confirmation* of this *impoſition*. I ſay, this *may* be the caſe, for any thing we know. For, as God is here ſuppoſed *ſometimes* to act arbitrarily; ſo this may be *ſuch* an inſtance of his arbitrary pleaſure, ſeeing we have no *rule* by which we can judge *when he acts thus*, and *when he acts otherwiſe*.

If it ſhould be urged, that ſuch a conduct, *viz.* the uſing of his power, or the ſuffering other inviſible agents to uſe theirs, for the confirmation of a lie, in a matter of ſuch importance, is inconſiſtent with God's moral perfections. I anſwer, ſo is every other inſtance of arbitrary pleaſure. And therefore, if an argument drawn from God's *moral* perfections is *concluſive* in *one* caſe, it muſt be ſo in *every* caſe; and, if ſuch an argument is *inconcluſive* in *one* inſtance, it will be ſo in *every* inſtance. And from hence I think it plainly appears, what a *precarious* foot the *divinity* of every religion ſtands upon, which is built upon *revelation*, ſuppoſing God acts arbitrarily, as aforeſaid; becauſe from hence it evidently appears *impoſſible*, in the nature of things, to prove any revelation to be *divine*, upon *this principle*. Beſides, ſuppoſing we could be able to prove a revelation to be divine, upon the preſent ſuppoſition, yet ſtill we ſhould be in a very *evil* caſe; becauſe God might, as an inſtance of his arbitrary pleaſure, actually *deceive* us *himſelf*, as well as leave us in the hands of other *deceivers*. And this leads me

to

to aſk of thoſe men (who maintain that God *ſometimes* acts arbitrarily) how they can *certainly know*, what will *pleaſe* God, and what are the *ſure grounds* upon which they build their *truſt* and *confidence* in him? If they ſay, that divine revelation is the *rule* of their actions, and the *ground* of their confidence, alas! this, in conſequence of their own principles, is like that broken reed *Egypt* (if I may be allow'd to uſe the Prophet's expreſſion) upon which, if a man lean, it may diſappoint his truſt. For, if God ſometimes acts arbitrarily, as in this caſe he is under no *reſtraint*; ſo he muſt be perfectly at *liberty* to *deceive* his creatures, whenſoever he pleaſes; and conſequently, the foundation of *certainty*, with regard to *revelation-evidence*, is taken away upon this principle. And this leads me to put to thoſe men their own queſtion, which I will leave them to anſwer: What, has not God a *right* to do what he will with his *own?* which is the ſame as to ſay, may he not *deceive* his *own creatures*, if he pleaſes? But I perſuade myſelf, that the greateſt *advocates* for arbitrarineſs in God will not allow that he is *equally* diſpoſed to reveal the *truth* or a *lie*; and that he does either of theſe at *pleaſure*; but, on the contrary, they will be ready to affirm, that *the ſupreme Being is a God of truth, who cannot lie*; and therefore is the *proper object* of their truſt. Which, if there be any meaning or conſiſtency in their words, is the ſame as to ſay, that *truth*, in the preſent caſe, is ſo *preferable* to *deceit* and *falſhood*, that God cannot but be diſpoſed, from the *reaſon* of the thing, to prefer the former before the latter, and to govern his actions accordingly. But then, I muſt take the freedom to turn their argument upon them; by obſerving, that, if God is always diſpoſed to reveal the truth from the *moral fitneſs* of ſuch a *conduct*,

duct, and therefore is the proper object of our confidence; then, I ſay, with equal reaſon, that he act *agreeably* to the moral fitneſs of things in *every* other caſe; becauſe the reaſon holds as *ſtrong*, and therefore will have as great an *influence* upon him to direct his practice in one caſe as in another. And conſequently, he will be as much diſpoſed, from the *reaſon* of the thing, to do what is right and fit in *every* caſe; as he is to *reveal* the *truth* in any *declaration* or *promiſe* he makes to his creatures.

If it ſhould be urged, allowing that God does make the moral fitneſs of things the meaſure of of his actions in all thoſe caſes in which that fitneſs can be a rule to him; yet ſeeing men are liable to make a *wrong* judgment, therefore it muſt be *right* to ſubmit to every divine command, becauſe the command would not be given, if there were not an *antecedent fitneſs* in the thing commanded; and that this was the caſe of *Abraham* when he was required to offer his ſon in ſacrifice, in which caſe *Abraham* could not ſee the *fitneſs* of ſuch an action, becauſe it had the *appearance* of the contrary. I anſwer, as God ſees thro' and to the end of things, and thereby has a perfect view of all the circumſtances and conſequences which attend our actions; ſo he muſt ſee wherein the fitneſs or unfitneſs of every action lies; and conſequently muſt be a much better judge, in many caſes, than man can poſſibly be whoſe views are vaſtly contracted. And, therefore, I ſay, that in all thoſe caſes in which there is no *apparent unfitneſs*, and where we are ſatisfied of the *divinity* of the command, there this will be a *reaſon* for our compliance; and if we ſhould be under a deluſion in judging the command to be divine, when in reality it is not, yet the deluſion would not be hurtful. But, if the thing commanded

appears

appears to us morally unfit, then there is not any thing which can give us a *reaſonable* ſatisfaction that the commandment is *divine*, becauſe here is the higheſt preſumption to the *contrary*. It is not enough to ſay, in this caſe, that our judgment ought to *ſubmit* to the infallible judgment of God, with regard to the fitneſs of the thing commanded, becauſe that would be to take the thing for *granted* which is in diſpute; the preſent queſtion not being, whether our judgment ought to come in *competition* with the judgment of our Maker, but only, whether the *command* in queſtion is of a divine original, or not. Beſides, if our judgment, of the fitneſs of things, is to be left out of the caſe, then we are laid open to the moſt *hurtful* and *ridiculous* impoſitions. For if we ſhould urge the cruelty, and barbarity, and the like, of any inſtitution, as an argument againſt its *divinity*, the ſame anſwer may be as juſtly returned in every caſe, *namely*, that tho' theſe may *appear* morally unfit to us, yet it may be *otherwiſe* with regard to God, and that therefore we ought to *ſubmit* our judgment to the judgment of our Maker. To this I may add, that if ſuch a caſe ſhould happen, as that the thing commanded has the *appearance* of unfitneſs, when in reality it is *otherwiſe*, every wiſe and good governour will do all that is neceſſary to *ſecure obedience*, and conſequently will give the *reaſon* of the command as well as the command itſelf, and thereby cut off that *exception* againſt obedience, which otherwiſe the command would be liable to. And, as God can have no end to anſwer in giving ſuch commands, but purely the *good* and *benefit* of his creatures; ſo he will, moſt certainly, not only give the command, but alſo reveal the *reaſon*, and ſhew the *fitneſs* of it; ſeeing this is abſolutely neceſſary to cut off all *diſputes*, which otherwiſe

wiſe may *juſtly* ariſe, whether the command is *divine*, or not.

As to the caſe of *Abraham*, I think, with ſubmiſſion, that the thing commanded was in itſelf *morally unfit*, and that God gave the command, not with an intent that it ſhould be obeyed, but that he might take an occaſion from it, to ſhew to *Abraham*, and to all his poſterity, the *unfitneſs of all human ſacrifices*. And that this was the caſe is, I think, evident from the event. For as the command was given to *Abraham* to be a tryal of his integrity, ſo when that end was anſwer'd, and *Abraham* had ſhewn a ſteady reſolution that he would deny himſelf in ſo ſignal an inſtance, rather than neglect to do what he judged to be his duty, then God *recalled* the command, and thereby teſtified his *diſlike*, and ſhewed the *unfitneſs of all ſuch practices*.

But that I may go to the bottom of all, and thereby remove what may be a *foundation* for objection in the preſent caſe, I beg leave to obſerve, that government, properly ſo called, or government, whoſe fitneſs is *founded* in the nature of things, is no other than the exerciſe of power, for the *benefit* of thoſe that are *governed*; and governours are no other than *guardians* of the *happineſs* of thoſe whoſe governours they are. So that if thoſe, who have the reins of government in their hands, imploy their power otherwiſe than for the good of thoſe they have under their care, this is the *abuſe* of power; this is *tyranny*, and not government, ſtrictly ſpeaking; and all inſtances of mere *ſovereignty*, that is, of power ſhewn for the ſake of ſhewing it, and not for the good of thoſe who are ſubjected to it; I ſay, all ſuch inſtances are manifeſtations not, of the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, but of the *weakneſs* and *vanity* of the legiſlator. The caſe is the ſame, whether we conſider go-

vernment as exerciſed by a *divine* or a *human* perſon; only with this difference, that if we conſider power as miſapplied, when in a divine hand, it has this to *aggravate* the caſe, *namely*, that it was done without any *temptation* to it; whereas men are ſometimes under a temptation to *miſapply* their power, as aforeſaid. But we have this for our conſolation, that God will not imploy his governing power *childiſhly* or *hurtfully*, but rightly, to anſwer the purpoſes of a *wiſe* and *good* government. It is true, God is our *Creature*, who has call'd us into being; and our continuing to be, and to be what we are, is owing to his good pleaſure. But then it is to be remembered, that our *obligations* to God ariſe not from his being barely and ſimply our *Creator*, but from his being a *kind* Creator to us. Barely to be is no *favour*, and conſequently can lay no *obligation*; but to be, to our *advantage*, that is a favour which calls for our acknowledgment, and obliges us to walk worthy of it, and to make a return of favour again, if the caſe will admit it, and requires it, which here it does not. God's being our *Creator* cannot poſſibly give him a right to exerciſe his dominion over us *unreaſonably*, and to our *hurt* (I ſay, and to our hurt, except our *demerit* renders us the proper objects of his *diſpleaſure*) it being altogether as unreaſonable, and unfit, in the nature of the thing, for God to act *arbitrarily* or *diſagreeably* with his creatures, as it is for thoſe creatures to deal thus one with another. God's calling us into being, without our *conſent*, does indeed render it fit, in the nature of the thing, that he ſhould make a *proviſion* for our *well-being*, as we are creatures capable of happineſs, and of the contrary; and as one or other of theſe muſt be our caſe, becauſe to be in *ſuch* a ſtate would be a *hardſhip* and an *injury* to us, without a proviſion for our well-being,

which

which proviſion (to our *comfort*, and to our *Creator's praiſe*) he has *plentifully* made for his creatures. The duty that we owe to God, and to our fellow-creatures, ariſes from our being *conſtituted*, *circumſtanted*, and *related* as we are; and the doing what is right and fit, in the nature of things. This becomes a *rule* and *law* to us, not as we are creatures, but as we are *intelligent beings*, that is, as we are qualified to diſcern the moral difference betwixt good and evil, and to direct our actions accordingly. For tho' God is the *author* of our nature, and of thoſe relation we ſtand in to him and to each other, yet when a creature is *thus* conſtituted and *thus* related, the duty, which he is in *reaſon* obliged to, will *neceſſarily* and *unavoidably* ariſe from his *compoſition* and his *relations*, as aforeſaid. And this will always be the caſe, that is, it will be eternally fit, in the nature of the thing, for a creature, conſtituted and related as man is, to act a part *ſuitable* to and *becomming* human nature. I ſay, this will always be his duty, whether God interpoſes by a revelation, and gives any commandment concerning it, or not. And, as the doing what is right and fit, in the nature of things, becomes a rule and law to us, as we are intelligent beings; ſo, in the nature of things, it is a *rule* to *God*, if I may may ſo ſpeak, that is, it is *equally* as fit that God ſhould act *agreeably* to this rule, as any other intelligent being whatever. And, conſequently, as this will always be the meaſure of God's actions, ſo he will *approve* or *diſapprove* of the actions of his *intelligent* creatures, as they are *agreeable* with, or *contrary* to this rule. So that the *ground* or *reaſon* why God is pleaſed with one action, and diſpleaſed with another, is not becauſe one is done in *obedience* to a divine *command*, and another is not; but becauſe the actions themſelves are the *proper objects*

of his approbation or diſlike. For, as the valuableneſs of every command ariſes from the *good* purpoſes it is made ſubſervient to; ſo the valuableneſs of obedience muſt *ſpring* from the ſame root. To do a thing, merely becauſe it is commanded, as there is not any thing *valuable* in the action, ſo it reflects *diſhonour* upon the legiſlator; becauſe it ſuppoſes that the action would not be done, were it not to *gratify* ſuch an humoriſt.

If *Abraham* had ſacrific'd his ſon, in *obedience* to the divine command (which, as I obſerved above, God never intended he ſhould, but on the contrary, by ſhewing his diſlike of all ſuch practices) in ſuch a caſe, tho' the ſimplicity, honeſty, and integrity of *Abraham* would have been *commendable*; yet the action itſelf would have been abominable both in the eyes of *God* and *man*, as it was an inſtance of cruelty, for a father to imbrue his hands in the blood of his *own ſon*, when that ſon had not done any thing, which made him forfeit his title to his *father's protection*, much leſs to forfeit his *life*; and, as it beſpoke the being, to whom the ſacrifice was offered, to be of an *evil diſpoſition*, becauſe the action ſuppoſes that he either *delighted* in, or that is *reſentment* was *removed* by ſuch an inſtance of barbarity. If it ſhould be ſaid, that the action would have been *ſanctified* by the divine command, which would have been the *ground* or *reaſon* of it; I anſwer, if it was an evil action, *antecedent* to the command, it muſt be ſo *after* it; becauſe the divine command cannot poſſibly *alter* the nature of things, and make a fact good which, in the nature of the thing, is evil. In *fine*, no one can, in the nature of the thing, have a right of dominion over us, any further than to rule us for our *good*, as I obſerved above; and therefore the true *ground* of all ſubjection, whether it be to human or to divine authority,

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is, that the government is exerciſed for the *common tranquility*. Having conſider'd the firſt propoſition, and what has been urged in its defence, I proceed to

PROPOSITION II.

Tho' true religion, or that which is the ground of divine acceptance, does conſiſt in doing what is right and fit, in the nature of things; yet it does not conſiſt in this alone, but alſo in our complying with thoſe forms of worſhip which are of divine inſtitution. So that, tho' we do the former, yet we ſhall not be acceptable to God, unleſs we perform the latter.

The difficulties, if there are any, which may ariſe from this propoſition, I imagine will be removed by what I ſhall ſay in the following obſervations. And, *firſt*, I obſerve, that the term *worſhip* is uſed, to ſignify ſomething *external*, either *words* or *actions*; and theſe words or actions are uſed, to expreſs the inward *reſpect* and *value* that one perſon has for another. And accordingly, when men are ſaid to *worſhip* God, they are ſuppoſed to perform ſomething *external*, by which they expreſs the ſenſe they have of the *excellency* and *valuableneſs* of their *Maker*. This I take to be the common, plain, and intelligible ſenſe of the term *worſhip*. And,

I obſerve. *ſecondly*, that no action, which is *ridiculous* in itſelf, or that is *hurtful* to mankind, can, in the nature of the thing, be an act of worſhip, when *commanded*. For, tho' compliance with ſuch a command is an inſtance of *ſubjection*, yet it cannot be a mark of *reſpect*; becauſe it ſets forth not the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, but the *weakneſs* or *unreaſonableneſs* of the legiſlator. For *example*, Suppoſe a people ſhould be required by

their governour to repair to a particular place at a particular time, and there to ſtand on their *heads*, or to *cut* and *wound* their bodies? In this caſe, compliance with ſuch commands cannot poſſibly expreſs the inward ſenſe, which the actor has of the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of the legiſlator, becauſe the action itſelf naturally and unavoidably expreſſes the *contrary*, that is, in one inſtance it plainly ſhews the legiſlator to be *weak* and *childiſh*, and in the other that he *unreaſonably* applies his authority to the *hurt* and *damage* of his ſubjects. But this ſurely cannot be the caſe with reſpect to God, who, as he always directs his actions by the rules of wiſdom and goodneſs, ſo he will not apply his authority *childiſhly* or *unreaſonably*, as aforeſaid; much leſs will he make compliance with ſuch laws the *ground* of *divine acceptance*, becauſe that would be to *approve* of what is really *diſagreeable*. And, if a perſon ſhould unhappily fall under a government, where ſuch laws take place, as aforeſaid; and, if ſome much greater evil attends his *non-compliance* with ſuch *laws*; in ſuch a caſe, tho' there is no *reaſon* for compliance, ariſing from the thing commanded, but plainly a reaſon againſt it, nor yet from the authority of the lawgiver, ſeeing no one can have a *right*, in the nature of the thing, to command what is *unreaſonable* in itſelf, yet compliance would be right; becauſe when two evils preſent themſelves, and one or other of them muſt of neceſſity be *ſubmitted* to, then it is right and fit, in the nature of things, that we ſhould chuſe the leaſt. Again,

I obſerve, *thirdly*, that, if there are any words or actions which are in themſelves *natural* marks of reſpect; and, if we worſhip God in the uſe of theſe, this is doing what is right and fit, in the nature of things, whether ſuch forms of worſhip

are

are of *divine* inſtitution, or not. And, conſequently, theſe do not come into the *preſent queſtion*; becauſe the forms of worſhip, mentioned in the propoſition, are conſidered as *over* and *above* what is right and fit, in the nature of things, and therefore cannot be conſidered as ſuch. Again,

I obſerve, *fourthly*, that the forms of worſhip, which I think properly come into the preſent queſtion, are ſuch external words and actions, as are *not* in themſelves *natural* marks of reſpect or diſreſpect; but are capable of being made *one* or the other, either by *cuſtom*, by *human*, or by *divine authority*. For *example*, Suppoſe *bowing* the *body* towards the *eaſt*, or towards a *carved image*, are actions which, in themſelves, are not natural marks of reſpect, nor diſreſpect, and that no *ill* conſequence was likely to attend the uſe of one, more than the other? and, ſuppoſe God (to prevent contention and diſcord, and to keep mankind in unity amongſt themſelves) ſhould kindly interpoſe, and require men to worſhip or pay their reſpect to him in the uſe of one or other of thoſe actions, before-mention'd? In this caſe the queſtion will be, whether there is a moral fitneſs, or not, in our complying with ſuch a command? If there is, then this likewiſe falls within the definition, which I have given of true religion, *viz.* it is doing what is right and fit in the nature of things. Now, in order to judge aright of the fitneſs or unfitneſs of ſuch an action, all *circumſtances* and *conſequences*, which ſtand related to it, muſt be taken into the caſe, as I obſerved above. If there are no circumſtances attending it, nor any conſequences following upon it, which render the action unfit, then, I think, with ſubmiſſion, that there is a moral fitneſs in our *complying* with ſuch a *law*; as it is a ſubmitting to the pleaſure of one, who watches over us for our

good, and as it contributes to *peace* and *unity* amongſt mankind. But, if our lot ſhould be caſt amongſt men who do not believe this form of worſhip to be of *divine* inſtitution, and who ſet up another form of worſhip in *diſtinction* from, and in *oppoſition* to it; and if our compliance with the divine command introduces *miſery* to ourſelves, and *confuſion* to the publick, in ſuch a caſe that compliance would, in the nature of the thing, be perfectly *wrong*, becauſe it would be the preferring a thing, which was in itſelf *indifferent*, to the *happineſs* of our own *life*, and the *peace* of the *publick*, which are certainly more *valuable*.

If it ſhould be urged, that God expects our compliance with ſuch his commands, tho' they are attended with thoſe or the like circumſtances and conſequences, as aforeſaid. I *anſwer*, this is not only begging the queſtion, but it is likewiſe a breaking in upon the *ſpotleſs character* of our heavenly Father, by repreſenting him not as a *wiſe* and *good*, but as a *peeviſh* and *ill-natured* Being, as one, who takes up an *unreaſonable* reſentment at the *prudent* conduct of his children. And, for the better illuſtration of this point, I beg leave to relate the following ſtory.

A man, who lived at *Saliſbury*, had two ſons living in *London*. And he, being deſirous of ſeeing them, wrote a letter, and order'd them to come to him at ſuch a time. And that they might afford aſſiſtance, protection, and comfort to each other in their journey, he order'd them to come home together. Now there being two roads from *London* to *Saliſbury*, the one by the way of *Andover*, and the other by the way of *Wincheſter*, and theſe roads being indifferent in themſelves with regard to the *eaſe* and *ſafety* of travellers, when the father wrote his letter: he therefore, to prevent any *contention* and *diſcord*

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that might ariſe betwixt his ſons about which road they ſhould take, gave it in charge, that they ſhould come by the way of *Wincheſter*. But before the time was expired for their ſons to take their journey, according to the appointment of their father, there happened to fall abundance of rain, which filled the ways with water, and ſwelled the rivers to ſuch a degree, as render'd their travelling the road, by the way of *Wincheſter*, exceeding *hazardous* to their *lives*. Now, this being the caſe, the queſtion will be, how the ſons ought in *reaſon* to act, and what a *wiſe* and a *kind* father could reaſonably expect from them. The elder ſon tenaciouſly adhered to the command of his father, and thought it was right that he ſhould run all *hazards*, rather than act contrary to what he judged to be his *duty*; *obedience* to his father's command, in the preſent caſe, he eſteeming to be ſuch. But the younger thought otherwiſe. And accordingly, he took the liberty to reaſon the caſe with his brother after this manner. Our father, ſaid he, gave this commandment to us, not out of a *capricious humour*, and to anſwer no *good* end, much leſs hereby, to lay a *trap* for our *lives*; but, on the contrary, he intended it for our *good*, by cutting off all occaſion for *contention* betwixt us, that otherwiſe might have ariſen about which way we ſhould take. And, ſeeing his end, in giving this command, is as well anſwered by our going to *Saliſbury* by the way of *Andover*, as by the way of *Wincheſter*, and ſeeing we cannot take the latter road, without the utmoſt *hazard* of our *lives*; it muſt, therefore, be highly *reaſonable* in itſelf, and moſt *acceptable* to our father, that we act *contrary* to his command, in this particular, as the circumſtances of things now ſtand. Beſides, ſaid he, if we follow the command, in the preſent caſe, it muſt highly reflect upon the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of our father; becauſe this ſuppoſes

poſes, that he prefers a *trifle* to the *ſafety* and *lives* of his *children*; which ſurely we can have no reaſon to think. But tho' the younger thus reaſon'd the caſe, yet it did not work conviction in the elder brother; he ſtill concluding, that ſuch reaſoning and ſuch a conduct did favour more of *policy* and *worldly wiſdom* then of *duty* and *obedience*; the latter, in his opinion, being vaſtly preferable to the former. The elder brother, being thus reſolved to adhere ſtrictly to the *letter* of his father's command, took his journey towards *Salisbury* by the way of *Wincheſter*; which proved very *fatal* to him, for it unhappily iſſued in his *death*. And this gave occaſion for different reflections; ſome men judging that he had given an inſtance of great *weakneſs*, and that he had *trifled* away his *life*; but others thought the contrary, concluding that hereby he had given an inſtance of great *virtue*, by his thus gloriouſly ſuffering *martyrdom* for the ſake of his *duty*, and to keep a *good conſcience*. The younger brother ſet out for *Saliſbury* by the way of *Andover*. And, as he came home in *ſafety*, ſo he had no ſooner come to his father, and given him an account of his and his brother's ſeparation from each other, but the dead corps of his elder brother was likewiſe brought home; the ſight of which threw their father into the utmoſt confuſion. But, when he had recover'd himſelf, and had reduced his paſſion to reaſon, he beheld his dead ſon, and wept over him. He much commended his *honeſty* and *integrity*, in that he would hazard his life, rather than do a thing which appeared to him to be *wrong*. He pitied his *weakneſs*, and lamented his *misfortune*. And, turning himſelf to his younger ſon, he *rejoiced* and was *comforted*; admiring and approving of the *juſtneſs* of his *reaſoning*, and the *prudence* of his *conduct*; looking upon both. as the happy means

of

of preſerving his own life. For, as he gave the commandment, purely out of *kindneſs*, and for his childrens *good*; ſo he judged, that, if it had proved the unhappy occaſion of both their deaths, it would have brought down his gray hairs with ſorrow to the grave. Thus ends my ſtory; and, I think, the caſes are parallel (ſo far as one is neceſſary to illuſtrate the other) and the application is eaſy.

If it ſhould be urged, that this reflects ſadly upon the *conduct* of the *Apoſtles* of Chriſt, who ran all *hazards*, and laid down their *lives* for the ſake of the goſpel. I *anſwer*, the caſe of the Apoſtles was in no wiſe parallel to the caſe before us. They were commanded to publiſh to the world the doctrine of *repentance*, and *remiſſion of ſins*, that is, they were ſent forth to convince mankind, that as their ſin and wickedneſs expoſed them to *divine diſpleaſure*; ſo their repentance and reformation would recommend them to *mercy*. And as theſe are truths, in which the *honour* of God, and the *happineſs* of mankind, as to this world and that to come, are nearly concern'd; ſo they were, in the nature of the thing, worthy of the Apoſtles *labours* to *propagate* them, and of their *lives* to *maintain* them. But, tho' the Apoſtles were ready to ſpend and be ſpent in order to propagate and defend the truths, beforemention'd, and the heavenly character of him from whom they received them; yet their *judgment* and *conduct*, with regard to *ceremonies*, was quite otherwiſe. With them circumciſion (that is, the uſe of ceremonies) was nothing; and uncircumciſion (that is, the neglect of ceremonies) was nothing; but as the circumſtances of things render'd the uſe, or the neglect of theſe, for the good and benefit of mankind. And thus St. *Paul* took and circumciſed *Timothy*, to prevent the

the unreaſonable reſentment of the *Jews*. And thus, he neglected to baptize the *Corinthians* (tho' baptiſm was inſerted in the apoſtolical commiſſion) that hereby he might prevent his being eſteemed the head of a party, and the evil conſequences which might follow upon it. Again, I obſerve, *fifthly*, that tho' the circumſtances and conſequences, which attend our compliance with thoſe forms of worſhip which are of divine inſtitution, do render that compliance fit and proper, in the nature of things; yet, I think, compliance cannot be ſo far the *ground* of *divine acceptance*, as that our non-compliance, in ſuch a caſe, would be a *bar* to that acceptance. For as on the one ſide, all men, who are diſpoſed to worſhip God, will be led, from the nature of the thing, to do it in that way, in which they think it will be *beſt* accepted; ſo on the other ſide, if a perſon ſhould think it *right*, and accordingly *drops* a ceremony of divine inſtitution, when the circumſtances of things render it proper to be preſerved and uſed; or if he ſhould *uſe* or *plead* for the uſe of ſuch a ceremony, when the circumſtances of things render it fit to be *neglected*, and to be *ſilent* about it; as ſuch a conduct is the effect of a *miſtaken judgment* only, and not of a *vicious mind*; ſo it cannot be a proper foundation for *reſentment*, and conſequently can be no *bar* to *divine* acceptance. The ſum of the matter is this, if God is, in reality, a wiſe and good Being, which ſurely none will be ſo hardy as to deny; then it will follow, that, in all his dealings with his creatures, he will act a part *ſuitable* to, and *becoming* ſuch a character.

Thus, Sir, I have laid before you the above obſervations, in order to remove every difficulty which might ariſe from the ſecond propoſition. And here I ſhould have ended my letter, were it

not

not for ſome other *complaints* which my *previous queſtion* has occaſioned, and which, it may be expected, I ſhould take notice of. And theſe are two, namely, *firſt*, that the terms *moral fitneſs* and *unfitneſs* do not *clearly* expreſs the *ideas* which I annex to them; and, *ſecondly*, that I am *pleading* the cauſe of *infidelity*.

As to the firſt I obſerve, that the diſtinctions of *good* and *evil* ariſe from, and are founded in the *nature* and the *relations* of things; and thoſe are uſually diſtinguiſhed into two ſorts, *viz. natural* and *moral*. By natural good, I mean that which gives *pleaſure* and *delight*; ſo as that the being, which enjoys it, may be truly ſaid to be *happy* in and by that enjoyment. And by natural evil, I mean that which gives *uneaſineſs* and *grief*; ſo as that the being, which ſuffers it, may be truly ſaid to be *unhappy* or *miſerable*. And, as theſe are plainly diſtinct and different in nature; ſo one of them, neceſſarily and unavoidably, becomes the object of our *approbation* and *purſuit*, and the other of our *averſion* and *ſhunning*. For, tho' natural good may be ſhunned, and natural evil may be choſen, in ſome inſtances; yet, in theſe caſes, they are not ſhunned or choſen for their own ſakes, but upon the account of ſome other good or evil, they ſtand related to. Thus we ſhun the enjoyment of good, when that enjoyment is either a *bar* to ſome *greater* good to ourſelves, or others, or when it is *introductive* of ſome *greater* evil to ourſelves, or others; or at leaſt, when we judge that to be the caſe. And thus we chuſe natural evil, when under the like circumſtances, but never for its own ſake. And, as theſe are differently the objects of our approbation and averſion; ſo they are capable of being *communicated*, that is, one being is capable of *giving* or *contributing* to the happineſs or miſery of another,

ther, and that too (as they are the ſubjects of a *free choice*) when it is in his power, and he is at liberty, either to *ſuſpend* the exerciſe of that ability, or to *exert* it, by giving or contributing to the happineſs of another, or by giving or contributing to the contrary. And, as happineſs and miſery are capable of being communicated; ſo it is in the uſe and exerciſe of that *capacity*, that *moral good* and *evil* conſiſt. When it is *rightly* uſed to the *production* of *happineſs*, that conſtitutes moral good; and when it is *abuſed* to the *production* of *miſery*, that conſtitutes moral evil; ſuppoſing the ſubject, in which that capacity reſides, is qualify'd to *diſcern* that one of theſe is a *right*, and the other a *wrong* application of ſuch power. I ſay, that one of theſe is a right, and the other a wrong application of that power. For, as we cannot but be convinced, from the nature of the things that happineſs is *preferable* to miſery, and that this muſt be the caſe, with regard to all who are capable of either; ſo the *communicating* of one of theſe muſt be *preferable* to the other alſo. That is, we cannot but be convinced, from the nature of the thing, that the communicating that to another, which is equally the object of all our approbation and liking, is *right* and *good*; and that the communicating that to another, which is equally the object of all our averſion and diſlike, is *wrong* and *evil*.

I ſhall not here enter into the queſtion, whether *perſonal viciouſneſs* may not render a being the *proper* object of *miſery*? I only conſider happineſs and miſery *abſtractedly*, from any *merit* or *demerit*, which they may be *related* to, and which may be the *ground* of them. And, when they are thus abſtractedly conſidered, then, I ſay, the communicating of happineſs is an action, which, in the nature of the thing, is *worthy* and *agreeable*; and which *approves* itſelf to our underſtandings; and

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the communicating of miſery is an action, which, in the nature of the thing, is *baſe* and *diſagreeable*, and which our underſtandings cannot but *diſapprove*. For, let but a perſon conſider *himſelf*, as made *miſerable* by *another*, and he will inſtantly ſee, that the other has acted a *diſingenuous* and *diſagreeable* part by him. And let him turn the tables, and conſider *himſelf*, as giving *miſery* to *another*; and then he will likewiſe unavoidably ſee, that it muſt, in the nature of the thing, be equally as *baſe* and *vile* for him to make *another* miſerable, as it is for that other to make *him* ſo. And, on the other ſide, let but a man conſider *himſelf*, as made *happy* by *another*, and then he will ſee, that the other has acted a part, which, in the nature of the thing, is really *honourable* and *praiſe-worthy*. And, let him turn the tables, and conſider *himſelf*, as giving *happineſs* to *another*, and, then he cannot but ſee the action in the ſame light. It will unavoidably appear to him as *reaſonable* and as *agreeable*, that he ſhould communicate happineſs to another, as that he ſhould receive happineſs from him. But farther, I obſerve, that natural good and natural evil come under a two-fold conſideration, *namely*, *publick* and *private*. Publick good is the good of a whole, and private good is the good of a *part* of that whole, when the good of the part is *diſtinct* from, and ſtands *oppoſed* to the good of the whole; publick and private evil is defined after the ſame manner. And, as good is, in the nature of the thing, preferable to evil, ſo *publick* good is likewiſe *preferable* to *private* good, when theſe come in competition. For, when the caſe ſo ſtands, as that the good of an individual, and the good of the whole, muſt of neceſſity, one or other of them, give place to the other, that every man's underſtanding convinces him, that the *leſs* good ought in *reaſon* to give place to the *greater*; and that it is really *bet-*

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ter, in the nature of the thing, that one man ſhould be *denied*, or that he ſhould *deny himſelf* pleaſure, for the *ſake* of the *whole*, than that the whole ſhould be *denied* for the *ſake* of *one*. The caſe is the ſame, with regard to publick and private evil. And,

From hence ariſes the diſtinction, which I have made betwixt *moral fitneſs* and *unfitneſs*; the terms ariſing from the *right* and the *wrong* application of that *power*, which is lodg'd in every intelligent being, to *communicate* happineſs or miſery, as aforeſaid. So that an action is morally good, or morally evil, and thereby becomes morally fit or unfit to be performed, as it is productive of, or ſome way or other ſtands related to, one or other of theſe. In all caſes, when publick good and evil do not come into the queſtion, there it is morally fit to *communicate happineſs*, and morally unfit to *communicate miſery*. If happineſs and happineſs come in competition, then it is morally fit to *prefer* the *greater* to the *leſs*. And if miſery and miſery come in competition, then it is morally fit to *prefer* the *leſs* to the *greater*. I ſhall not enter into every queſtion, which the ſubject may be liable to; ſuch as when a man's own happineſs or miſery come into competition with the happineſs or miſery of another; or when the happineſs or miſery of two others come in competition, and the like. Every man's underſtanding will inform him, wherein the moral fitneſs or unfitneſs of every ſuch action does conſiſt, when he has taken the *relations* and *circumſtances* of the *perſons* and *actions* into the caſe. But, if the queſtion relates to publick good and evil, then, I ſay, every action which upon the *whole* (taking in all circumſtances and conſequences) tends to and is *productive* of the *common felicity*, is right and fit, in the nature of things; this fitneſs I call *moral*;

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and every action, which upon the *whole* is *hurtful* to *mankind*, is *morally evil*. And foraſmuch as man is capable of making a *wrong* judgment in the preſent caſe, he not being always apprized of the *circumſtances* which attend an action, or the *conſequences* that follow it, therefore I ſay, that in every action which is *directed* and *intended* to introduce happineſs, or for the common good, the agent is *virtuous* in and by the performance of ſuch actions, whether the action introduces what was intended by it, or not; and in every action which is *directed* and *intended* to introduce miſery, or for the common hurt, or which is performed at the apparent hazard of the happineſs of others, or the common felicity, the agent is *vicious* in and by the performance of ſuch actions. So that

Virtue does not conſiſt (as ſome have imagined) in *running croſs* to *nature*, by preferring miſery to happineſs; but in a generous proſecution of the happineſs of others, and in denying ourſelves for the ſake of others, and for the common tranquillity. Neither does vice conſiſt in *following nature*, by preferring happineſs to miſery; but in a *ſelfiſh monopolizing* happineſs to ourſelves; and in proſecuting our own pleaſures and deſires, when they are *inconciſtent* with or *deſtructive* of the happineſs of *others*, or of the *common felicity*.

I am ſenſible that there are two caſes with regard to moral fitneſs and unfitneſs, which at firſt ſight may ſeem to have no relation to, or be founded upon the principles I have here laid down, *viz.* the making a *grateful acknowledgment* of a *favour* received, and the ſhewing *reſentment* for an *injury* done, when a proper occaſion offers. But I perſuade myſelf, that every man, who carefully examines the caſe, will ſee, that the fore-mention'd principles are the ground and reaſon of each of theſe. For if the communicating of

happineſs was not *right* and *fit* in *itſelf*, there could be no *foundation* for gratitude. That is, if there was not ſomething really valuable in the action, then there could not be any thing *worthy* of our acknowledgment. So that the fitneſs of the latter has an apparent dependence upon the fitneſs of the former. And on the other ſide, if the communicating of unhappineſs was not, in the nature of the thing, really *unfit*, then there could be no *reaſon* or *ground* for our reſentment; and conſequently, the latter of theſe neceſſarily ſuppoſes the former, and is founded upon it. And, tho' God is the author of *nature*, and of thoſe *relations* which things ſtand in one to another; yet when things are thus conſtituted, and thus related, good and evil will *neceſſarily* and *unavoidably* ariſe from the nature, and from the relations of the things themſelves, and not from the arbitrary will and pleaſure of their Maker. Thus pain will be *evil* and *afflictive*, even tho' God ſhould determine and declare the contrary. His determination cannot poſſibly convince us, that pain is *pleaſant*, becauſe we experimentally *feel* and *know* the contrary. And thus the communicating of happineſs will, in the nature of the thing, be really valuable in itſelf, and highly preferable to the communicating of miſery, whether God determines any thing concerning it, or not. Having thus remov'd what gave occaſion for the firſt complaint, by ſtating the notion of the terms beforemention'd, I now proceed to the

Second, namely, that I have been *pleading* the cauſe of *infidelity*, by which I ſuppoſe is meant, infidelity with regard to the *chriſtians* revelation. But ſurely this complaint is as *unkind*, as it is *groundleſs*. And all that, I think, is needful for me to ſay, in the preſent caſe, is to requeſt of the complainers,

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to conſider, what a *complement* they hereby pay the chriſtian religion, by thus repreſenting it as an *arbitrary inſtitution*; given by God, not out of *kindneſs* to mankind, but as an inſtance of his *abſolute ſoveraignty* and *dominion* over them; which muſt be the caſe, if what I have ſaid, in my *previous queſtion*, is *injurious* to the chriſtian religion. And, thus much, I think, I may venture farther to ſay, that whether the preſent complaint againſt me is juſt, or not, yet the giving ſuch a *repreſentation* of the chriſtian religion, as aforeſaid, is moſt certainly *paving* the way to *infidelity*. Tho' I perſuade myſelf, that there is not any thing, which can ſtrictly and properly be called the *chriſtian religion*, but which may be ſhewn to be the effect of *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*, and not of *capricious humour* and *arbitrary pleaſure*. The *chriſtian revelation* gives us the moſt *beautiful* repreſentation of *God*, with regard to his *moral character*; it ſets him forth as the *fountain* of *wiſdom* and *goodneſs*; as the *Father* of *mercies*, and the *God* of all *conſolations*; yea, as *love* itſelf. And this leads me to enquire, what it is, that muſt conſtitute ſuch a character, and wherein each of theſe conſiſts. Does not wiſdom and goodneſs conſiſt in a *right application* of *knowledge* and *power*? Surely, God is not *wiſe*, becauſe he is *knowing*; neither is he *good*, becauſe he is *powerful*; but he is both wiſe and good in the *right* exerciſe of theſe, that is, as he applies his knowledge and power rightly in ſerving the *beſt* of *purpoſes*, namely *kindneſs* and *benevolence*. He is both wiſe and good, in calling a multitude of creatures into being capable of *happineſs*; and in a plentiful proviſion of all things, *neceſſary* to make them ſo. He is merciful and loving, in that he ſhews the moſt tender regard to the *happineſs* and *well-being* of his creatures. And, is this the caſe? then ſurely it muſt be moſt monſtrous to ſuppoſe, that what I have ſaid, in my

previous queſtions is *injurious* to the chriſtian religion, ſeeing all that I have ſaid is no more than the *aſſerting* and *maintaining* God's *moral* character, as aforeſaid. And therefore, I deſire it may be conſidered, whether ſuch a repreſentation of me be not *injurious* to the *chriſtian religion*; becauſe it conſiders the chriſtian revelation, as a *contradiction* to *itſelf*, by repreſenting it as an inſtitution, which is inconſiſtent with the character it gives of that Being, whom it claims for its Author. It is true, the religious *ſchemes* of chriſtians are too often *mixed* and *compounded* of ſuch *contradictions*, as aforeſaid. For in them men are led to make *a general* acknowledgment of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, when the *particulars* of thoſe ſchemes plainly repreſent him to be otherwiſe. But, I preſume, this cannot be *juſtly* charged upon chriſtianity itſelf; and therefore I would deſire thoſe men, when they *interpret* the chriſtian revelation, to take the *nature* and the *fitneſs of things* into the caſe, or elſe they will be in danger of offering *violence* to the *moral* character of our *heavenly Father*

If men would but conſult the *nature* and *reaſon* of things, in their enquiries concerning the *properties* and *conduct* of the Almighty, it would prevent them from raiſing all thoſe *falſe* and *unworthy* images of God, which are too frequently pictur'd in their minds. Men are apt to form their conceptions of *God* and of his *actions*, form what they ſee *grand* and *magiſterial* in the *princes* and *potentates* of the *earth*; only with this difference, in men they conſider it as *limited* and *finite*, but when they carry their thoughts to God, they conſider it in him, as *boundleſs* and *infinite*. That *pomp*, that *arbitrarineſs*, that *reſentment*, that *inſatiable revenge*, that *contempt*, &c. which ſome earthly monarchs put on, and which command the *fears*, the *humble addreſſes*, the *fulſome flatteries*, and the *ſla-*

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viſh ſubmiſſion of thoſe that are under them: this is that *glaſs*, which men look thro' when they take a *view* of their Creator. And this has led them, not to change the *glory* of the *incorruptible God* into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beaſts, and creeping things; but into that, which is much worſe, *namely*, into the *likeneſs* and *ſimilitude* of an *evil ſpirit*. That is men have repreſented God, as under the influence of *evil* and *vicious* affections, ſuch as cruelty, inſatiable revenge, *&c.* which is the *true picture* of an evil ſpirit. St. *Paul* told the *Corinthians*, 1 Epiſt. Chap. x. 20. That *the things which the* Gentiles *ſacrificed, they ſacrificed to Devils, and not to God.* That is, the *Gentiles*, by their ſacrifices, *addreſſed* them ſelves to beings (real or fictitious) which they apprehended to be under the power of *evil affections*, and ſo they ſacrificed to devils. And well had it been, if this could have been charged *only* on the *Gentiles*. But, alas! ſome *chriſtians* have drawn ſuch a picture of the *Deity*, as makes him *reſemble* the *chiefeſt of devils*. They have repreſented God, as calling a multitude of creatures into being, *on purpoſe* to make them *miſerable*. And, that he might have a *colour* of doing *juſtice* in the caſe, they conſider him as placing thoſe creatures in, ſuch a ſtate, as that they muſt *neceſſarily tranſgreſs* and then *puniſhing* them *eternally* for that tranſgreſſion: then which, I think, nothing can be more *cruel* and *barbarous*, it being far worſe, then what is commonly charged upon the *devil himſelf*. The devil is uſually repreſented, as *tempting* men to that which expoſes them to divine diſpleaſure. And ſo he endeavours to make them *miſerable*, but leaves it at their *choice*; whether they will *follow* his temptations, or *not*: whereas God is conſidered as *ordaining* to *miſery*, *antecedent* to men's *choice*. And tho' theſe, and the like religious principles reflect *great diſhonour* upon God, with regard to

his *moral* character, yet the men of theſe principles pretend to have the *higheſt zeal* for his honour and glory. And accordingly, if they can find a perſon, who they think has taken up *falſe* notions of the Deity, with regard to his *natural* character, *namely*, his natural *properties*, his *perſonality*, and the like, then they open their mouths like a trumpet to proclaim ſuch a one's *great wickedneſs*, as they are pleaſed to call it; and charge him with *blaſphemy*, and with doing the *greateſt diſhonour* to his Maker: not conſidering that the diſhonour done to God when conſidered in his *natural* capacity, bears no compariſon with that much greater diſhonour done to him, when conſidered in his *moral*. Suppoſe a man to be of a *healthy vigorous conſtitution*, and that he is realy a *wiſe honeſt virtuous* man; and ſuppoſe any one ſhould ſay of him, that he is *weak* and *infirm* in his *body*; and another ſhould ſay, that he is a *fool* or a *knave*; in both caſes the man's character is *injur'd*; in the former in his *natural*, in the latter in his *moral* capacity. And here, I preſume, it will be allow'd by all, that the injury done in the *former* caſe bears no compariſon to the injury done to the man's character in the *latter*. And yet this is the very caſe, with reſpect to *God*. The *injury* done him, with regard to his *natural* character, is as it were nothing when compared with that *much greater*, which is done him in his *moral*. I ſhall not here aggravate the caſe, but leave it to every man's ſerious conſideration. And,

Now, I think, I begin to *exceed* the bounds of a *letter*, and to caſt a *blemeſh* upon my former performance. For will not every one be ready to ſay of my *previous queſtion*, ſurely, its *defects* were great, if it needed ſo *large* a *ſupply*? But ſuppoſe I have been faulty in making the *ſup-*

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